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KENT ON SUNDAY

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'DISGRACE' OF THE CANCER SURVIVAL POSTCODE LOTTERY

THE NHS in Kent has been told to get better at diagnosing cancer earlier after a report revealed some of the worst survival rates in England.

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

A study by the Government's 'cancer tsar' Professor Mike Richards shows patients in some areas of the county are more likely to die from breast, colon and lung cancer within a year of diagnosis than those living elsewhere.

Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust had particularly poor figures for 2006, with its one-year survival rates for the big three cancers all being in the worst quarter nationally.

Bexley NHS Care Trust and NHS West Kent were both in the worst 25 per cent for colon cancer with rates of patients still alive one year after diagnosis of 66.8 per cent and 67.9 per cent respectively.

And NHS Medway was also in the bottom quarter for lung cancer, with 23.2 per cent of patients alive after 12 months.

Lung cancer rates include deaths from mesothelioma, caused by asbestos, which are particularly high in Medway because of its industrial past. In comparison, Kensington and Chelsea's one-year survival rate for lung cancer is 43.7 per cent.

Cancer Research UK chief executive Harpal Kumar said there was "no excuse" for the differences in life expectancy between different areas.

He added: "The cancer postcode lottery remains a real problem. Patients are undoubtedly not being diagnosed early enough in large parts of the country, nor are they getting equal access to the best treatments such as surgery for lung cancer.

"It's a disgrace that such a small proportion of primary care trusts have survival rates that match the best figures in Europe, or even the best rates in Europe 10 years ago.

"This needs urgent action."

One-year survival rates are seen by those in the health profession as key to measuring early diagnosis because death before the one-year mark is likely to be due to the disease only being identified at a late stage.

It is not all bad news for Kent though, as Bexley's breast cancer survival rate is among the best in the country, as is Bromley's colon cancer survival rate.

The two trusts also have high percentages of eligible women being screened for cervical cancer, as does Medway and West Kent. Medway's

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO

Obama's Afghan strategy all wrong says MP

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ONE-YEAR SURVIVAL RATES FOR CANCERS (%)

PCT	BREAST	COLON	LUNG
Bexley	96.9*	66.8!	29.3
Bromley	95.9	75.1*	28.7
Eastern/Coastal	93.5!	65.1!	23.7!
Medway	94.6	70.9	23.2!
West Kent	94.4	67.9!	29

*Best quartile !Worst quartile

FROM FRONT PAGE

breast cancer screening figure is also in the top quarter.

Bill Gullick, professor of cancer biology at the University of Kent and scientific adviser to the Kent Cancer Trust, played down the significance of the "worst quartile" figures, but said it was good they had been released.

He said: "When you take an average survival rate you will inevitably see variations throughout the country, with some being better and some being worse. It's a very good idea to make it clear to the public that there are variations to cancer outcomes and that this is normal. I would be horrified if every hospital recorded the same figures.

"I know a lot of cancer clinicians in this area, but I don't know a single one who is not highly motivated to do the best for his or her patients. There are no lazy doctors, I can assure you, but if I was working for one of the hospitals that had survival rates that were less than average then I would want to explore why that was.

"From a scientific point of view we would like to be able to detect cancers earlier and there is a tremendous amount of work going on to try to do that. We also need to make sure the right patients are always getting the right drugs that are suitable for them."

Formerly president of both the Federation of European Cancer Societies and the European Association for Cancer Research, Prof Bullick specialises in breast cancer and said there was cause for optimism in fighting the disease.

He said: "The mortality rate for breast cancer has dropped 30 per cent in the last 30 years. That's a third of women who previously would have died now living, and that's an achievement. It's all down to small improvements like screening, early diagnosis, more effective surgery and better drugs."

Dr Julia Duke-MacRae, co-medical director of public health for the Kent and Medway Cancer Network, put the low survival rates down to patients being reluctant to bother their GP with symptoms they are unsure about. She added there were also high rates of smoking in the area, particularly in Eastern and Coastal Kent and in Medway.

Dr Duke-MacRae said: "The NHS is addressing both these issues. We have excellent support available for people to help them stop smoking, and research shows smokers are four times more likely to succeed in quitting with professional support.

Improved

"Through the national awareness and early diagnosis initiative, Kent and Medway Cancer Network is running projects to encourage earlier recognition of symptoms by patients, leading to earlier referral, treatment and an improved chance of better outcomes.

"Screening rates have improved and continue to improve locally, and a new screening programme for bowel cancer has already begun in many parts of Kent and Medway."

Meanwhile, NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent, Medway and West Kent will be one of the first trust's in the UK to expand the age range of women invited to breast cancer screening from 50-70 years to 47-73 years – well ahead of national targets.

Lowly patient safety rating 'out of date'

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

THE hospital trust serving Bexley and Bromley has been ranked one of the worst in the country for patient safety.

South London Healthcare is placed a lowly 141st out of 146 trusts by the Dr Foster Hospital Guide, which draws from data such as mortality rates, response times and the ratio of hospital beds to staff.

The trust – which oversees the running of Queen Mary's in Sidcup, the Princess Royal in Orpington, the Beckenham Beacon and Orpington Hospital – scored just 4.8 out of 100 for patient safety, with higher than average death rates for heart attack victims, patients admitted with broken hips, and those admitted for low-risk procedures.

However, bosses say the data used in the report was collected before last April when South London Healthcare was formed after the merger of three smaller hospital trusts.

A statement read: "Since the merger we have placed our highest priority on improving patient safety. In eight months we have reduced infection rates and improved survival rates so in both areas we are performing above the national average.

"In the previous year (08-09), the three sites had a total of 26 MRSA bloodstream infections, and this year we have had 10 to date. Every single case of MRSA infection is one too many and we will be satisfied when we have none."

There was better news for East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust, which ranked 13th in the Dr Foster table with a score of 92.47 and was placed in the top band for patient safety.

The trust – which runs hospitals in Canterbury, Ashford, Margate, Dover and Folkestone – also had a lower than average death rate.

Chief executive Stuart Bain said: "We are delighted to have achieved so highly in this report. Patient safety is our number one priority and we are always looking for ways to improve further."

Meanwhile, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells was ranked 38th in the table with a score of 72.6, Dartford and Gravesham 72nd (52.05) and Medway a lowly 91st (36.3).

A Medway spokeswoman said the trust had made improvements in data collection and end-of-life care since the figures for the report were taken.

She also pointed out that the guide highlights the trust for outstanding performance in three areas – lowering mortality rates, gall bladder surgery and broken hip surgery.

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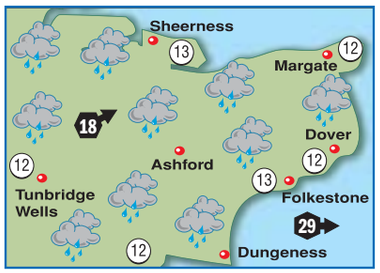
Kent today



TODAY: A windy day. Rain first thing. It will then be bright with sunny spells, but also the chance of a few showers in the south. Strong westerly winds. Max temp 10-13C (50-55F). **TONIGHT:** Variable amounts of cloud with a scattering of showers. Brisk south-westerly winds. Min temp 5-8C (41-46F).

Around Britain

		°C	°F			°C	°F
Aberdeen	rain	10	50	London	showers	13	55
Belfast	fair	8	46	Liverpool	showers	10	50
Birmingham	showers	12	54	Manchester	showers	11	52
B'mouth	showers	13	55	Newcastle	showers	11	52
Bristol	showers	12	54	Norwich	rain	12	54
Cardiff	showers	12	54	Oxford	showers	12	54
Cork	showers	9	48	Southsea	showers	13	55
Edinburgh	showers	10	50	S'hampton	showers	12	54
Glasgow	showers	9	48	Southport	showers	11	52
Isle of Man	showers	10	50	Swansea	showers	11	52
Leeds	rain	10	50	Torquay	showers	12	54

Sun & moon

Sunrise	7.46am	Sunset	3.46pm	Lighting up times:
Moonrise	8.55pm	Moonset	11.09am	3.46pm to 7.47am

High Tides

	today				tomorrow			
	ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)	
Dover	01.21	6.7	13.42	6.5	02.12	6.5	14.39	6.3
Margate	02.06	4.7	14.47	4.7	02.53	4.6	15.40	4.6
St Mary's	07.12	5.7	19.41	5.3	08.03	5.5	20.35	5.1

Week ahead

monday Showers, heavy. max 12C min 6C

tuesday Dull. Rain. max 12C min 8C

wednesday Scattered showers. max 13C min 7C

thursday Isolated showers. max 11C min 5C

friday Isolated showers. max 11C min 4C

saturday Isolated showers. max 10C min 4C

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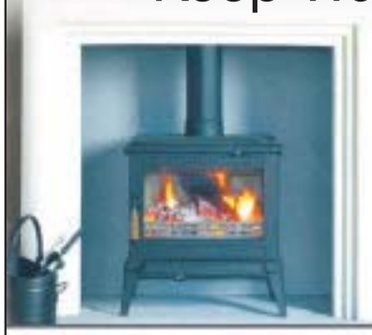
Keep Warm With Wood This Winter



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Professor says child protection rules have 'created a monster'

School photo paranoia 'totally out of control'

CONFUSION over rules meant to protect pupils from paedophiles means parents may miss out on filming and taking pictures of their children in school nativity plays, ***writes Marijke Cox***.

Some schools have chosen to enforce strict rules when it comes to videoing youngsters, while others – including many in Kent – have only imposed restrictions on 'vulnerable' children, such as victims of abuse.

The uncertainty follows a misunderstanding on guidance issued by the Office of the Information Commissioner about the Data Protection Act that meant many schools thought they had to ban photography altogether.

Despite the Government insisting there was no law against filming, education insiders say schools are still unsure about the situation. Kent County Council said it had issued guidance to schools and that consent forms are available so families were aware of photos or recordings being made. A spokesman said: "Parents can take photographs or film their own children at school events, such as nativity plays. If photographs or recordings are to be made more widely available or sold, then permission is required by all those featured.

"The guidance is there to help. Schools do take a commonsense approach to this. Headteachers would not want to stop families capturing key moments of their child's life, but have to consider any vulnerable children in their care."

Headteacher Nigel Utton, of Bromstone Primary in Broadstairs, agreed that filming should be down to common sense.

He said: "We are vigilant and careful. The children's safety is paramount and we work on a case-by-case basis.

"The problem is some children are covered by protection restrictions for various reasons. A number of them we have to be careful with. But generally it's down to the school to use common sense and we don't ban parents filming or taking pictures."

But Frank Furedi, a professor of sociology at the University of Kent, has attacked the Government for breeding mistrust through over-cautious advice about filming children.

He also believes parents are being stripped of their natural instincts through reliance on criminal records checks. The author of Paranoid Parents said stringent rules about children had gone too far.

"The Government has created a monster it didn't set out to make," he said. "It has sent out a message saying if you work with children or are close to children, no matter what you do, you have to be careful. Suspicions are immediately aroused when there are children involved."

The Department for Children, Schools and Families, however, insists there is no law against parents filming at school events.

A spokesman said: "We advise schools and local authorities to use common sense when it comes to things like this."

But Prof Furedi believes people are so unsure about what they can and can't do they have become paranoid.

"I have a 14-year-old son who plays in a football team, but I have not one picture of him playing," he said. "If I want to take one, I would have to get permission from every single parent of every boy on the pitch and it's too much trouble."

Artificial

Prof Furedi said society was beginning to rely on Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks as a way to separate the good from the bad.

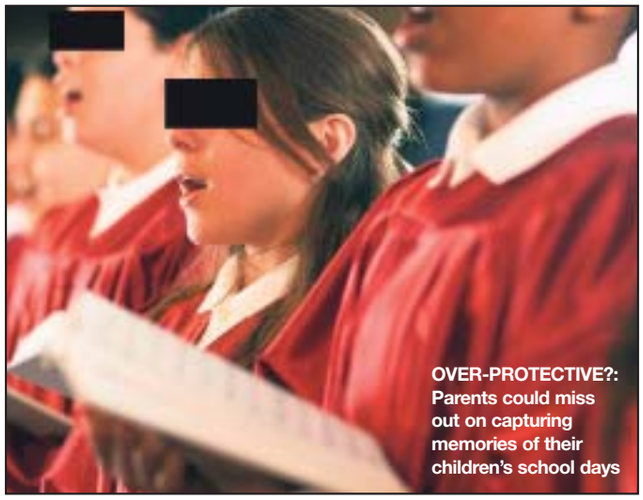
"This check has become like a badge of honour, but it's artificial. Just because you have a CRB check doesn't mean you can't do bad things.

"It's de-skilling parents of their natural instincts. Instead of being sensitive and instinctive, they are relying on CRB checks to tell whether someone is good or bad."

Prof Furedi said he was shocked to learn of parents in Kent who had CRB checked themselves so they could have their children's friends visit for sleepovers.

"People are so paranoid they are getting themselves checked so they can tell other parents it's safe for their children to come over and play," he said.

"It's got completely out of control."



OVER-PROTECTIVE?: Parents could miss out on capturing memories of their children's school days

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Sat nav 999 theft

LIVES were put in danger when thieves took a satellite navigation screen from an ambulance on an emergency call-out.

The ambulance was targeted while the crew responded to an incident involving an elderly woman in the early hours of Sunday, November 22. The vehicle was in Nottingham Avenue, Shepway, when the sat nav was stolen. A bottle was also thrown at the windscreen. Another ambulance had to be sent to take the patient to Maidstone Hospital.

Senior operations manager Chris Stamp said: "The screen is useless without the software. All this theft did was prevent us from helping those who need us most."

'Misguided' Macca

KENT MEP Richard Ashworth has blasted former Beatle Sir Paul McCartney over his Meat Free Monday campaign.

The Tory agriculture spokesman said the star was "muddled, misleading and wrong" for trying to get everyone to avoid eating meat one day a week to tackle climate change.

Mr Ashworth said: "Sir Paul seems to be forgetting farmers created the green and pleasant land we live in and gimmicks like this will harm attempts to deal with the problem."

To view, search 'biological' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

Discover the important work being done at Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre

Swindler picks up the tab

A TRICKSTER swindled hundreds of pounds from celebrity chefs' restaurants after copying a scam from a BBC TV show.

Carl Nevill conned top restaurants owned by Heston Blumenthal and Rick Stein by claiming a waiter had spilled wine on him during a meal at their restaurant and asking for them to foot the cleaning bill.

The conman would send them a dry-cleaning receipt for £9 – downloaded from the internet – and when he received the cheques would alter the amount by adding zeros.

In reality, the 23-year-old crook had never eaten at any of the restaurants – including the Fat Duck in Bray, Berkshire, run by Blumenthal, and the Seafood Restaurant in Padstow, Cornwall, owned by Stein. He also targeted the White Horse, in Brancaster Staithe, Norfolk. Nevill, who appeared before Maidstone magistrates this week, saw the con on BBC series The Real Hustle and decided to try it.

Blumenthal

Stein

In the show, scams are carried out on the public and businesses, all filmed with hidden cameras. The BBC says the aim is to reveal how the tricks work so viewers can avoid being ripped off.

Nevill, of Underwood Road, Croydon, was finally caught after staff at a Maidstone shop became suspicious when he tried to cash four of the cheques.

The conman pleaded guilty to two charges of fraud by false representation and asked for another four offences to stay on file.

Nevill was fined £200, ordered to pay court costs and £90 compensation each to the Fat Duck, Seafood Restaurant and White Horse.

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Higher standards welcomed after Baby P tragedy

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knightk@kosmedia.co.uk

SWEEPING changes to social work standards in the wake of the Baby P scandal have been welcomed by an expert at the University of Kent.

The Government announced this week it had accepted all 15 proposals put forward by the Social Work Taskforce, including plans to reform pay, and improve the quality of social work degrees and the calibre of recruits.

An independent national college will also be established for the industry, while all social workers will now require a licence to practice.

BABY P: Tragedy led to changes

Ruben Martin – a senior lecturer with 20 years' experience in social work – agreed certain aspects of the profession had been in need of a change.

He said: "Social workers at the moment do their three-year undergraduate degree but it's still a step forward for them to be able to do it as a job. It will be much better for them to have a protected year with supervision and support, and perhaps in-service training.

"The taskforce researched this and some new social workers said they did not feel ready, but a lot depends on where they go and how large a workload they are given.

"We expect newly-qualified social workers not to be thrown in at the deep end, but if employers are short-staffed they are often asked to take on too much, too soon. I hope these reforms will stop that happening."

A Local Government Association survey revealed that six out of 10 authorities were having difficulty retaining frontline staff – an increase of 50 per cent from last year – due to the stigma attached to the profession following the Baby P tragedy.

Kent County Council has invested £1.5 million in recruiting additional social workers and has filled almost 100 vacancies, but Mr Martin said the university did not have a problem attracting new students.

For the past two years its social work degree has come top of the National Student Survey for satisfaction.

Mr Martin said: "I understand applications have decreased nationally but we've not seen that. We receive about 500 applications a year and last year they were slightly up. We aim to accept 45 students each year, but in September we had 52.

EXPERT VIEW: Ruben Martin

"We have close contact with local employers, particularly KCC and Medway Council. We invite them to speak to students and by and large we have received positive reports of our degree programme. That's not to say we're not always looking at ways to improve, and we're happy to look at a review to see what else is needed."

Despite repeated visits from social workers, 17-month-old Baby P – now identified as Peter Connolly – died after enduring sustained abuse at the hands of his mother, her boyfriend and her boyfriend's brother in Haringey, north London, in August, 2007.

Mr Martin said that despite the reforms, he could not rule out the possibility of such a tragedy occurring again.

He said: "It would be difficult to guarantee this will never happen again because we are dealing with human beings, and social workers are human. There is always the possibility social workers will miss some of the important clues, which is why we must follow the guidelines and recommendations to minimise the risk of that happening."

Coxon's Kurt response

KURT COBAIN: Started the grunge phenomena

BLUR'S Graham Coxon hated kings of grunge Nirvana and even blamed the band from Seattle for almost wrecking his career, calling their music "awful".

GRAHAM COXON

The guitarist, who lives near Canterbury, said his Britpop band nearly folded after Nirvana took off in 1991 with the single Smells Like Teen Spirit. Nirvana broke up after frontman Kurt Cobain committed suicide in 1994. But Coxon loathed the group.

He told Contact Music: "I didn't know it at the time, but our career was in jeopardy. We had our second album, Modern Life Is Rubbish, which was very English-sounding and kind of clever, witty pop music, and nobody was interested. Apparently, the label wanted us to re-record the album with Nirvana's producer, which is pretty laughable.

"The mood was Nirvana and that whole disgusting movement. I mean, Nirvana weren't disgusting, but in their wake was just the most awful s***, and Modern Life was the opposite of that."

The 40-year-old rocker adapted his writing style during that time. He said: "My material was fuelled by the disillusion of having spent time in America and seeing the seed of a new commercial Britain evolving. I didn't really look back after that, because I'd found my sense of detachment and disillusionment and started to be able to channel it in music."

TB on the rise

THE number of people developing tuberculosis (TB) is growing, according to medical experts.

Last year in the South East, 719 cases were reported, 154 in Kent, an increase of 2.5 per cent on the 2007 figure of 701.

Nationally, there were 8,655 reported cases in 2008. Dr Mathibalasingham Chandrakumar, director of the Kent Health Protection Unit, said: "Cases are at their highest since the late 1980s. The key is early diagnosis and treatment. TB is preventable and treatable, but left untreated it can be life-threatening."

TB is a bacterial infection, usually affecting the lungs.

To view, search 'Peter Pan' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

Meet the stars of Peter Pan who will be performing at the Marlowe Theatre Arena

Author's chance encounter with warrior leads to fascinating Afghan war accounts…

To Helmand and back again

By **NICK AMES**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

TWO of the most highly regarded books to come out of the conflict in Afghanistan recount the experiences of Captain Doug Beattie of 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles.

The Military Cross holder first put together an account of a ferocious battle against the Taliban to retake the town of Garmsir, in a book titled An Ordinary Soldier.

The follow-up, Task Force Helmand, describes Capt Beattie's return to the warzone in the role of mentoring and training members of the Afghan National Police and Afghan National Army.

But for a chance encounter in 2006 underneath a camouflage net while waiting for a Hercules transport aircraft out of the British base Camp Bastion, and the prompting of Capt Beattie's wife Margaret, neither book would have seen the light of day.

PHILIP GOMM

The man with the task of turning the Northern Irish officer's notes and memories into bestseller material was Philip Gomm, who met him while waiting to return to the UK after working as a cameraman in the combat zone.

Mr Gomm, who lives just outside Ashford, said: "I'd been filming for ITV, including Meridian, and was on my way home.

"I was waiting for a flight while sitting next to a chap with a battered and bruised face. It looked as though he'd been involved in something serious.

"We got talking and it turned out he'd fought a battle to retake Garmsir which should have lasted two days but he was actually there for two weeks. Like all Irishmen, he told a good story.

"And it wasn't just about Afghanistan. Doug had guarded [Nazi henchman] Rudolph Hess in Spandau jail and been a Regimental Sergeant Major under [Iraq War hero] Colonel Tim Collins. He was clearly not a two-dimensional soldier.

OVER THERE: Target indication at its most primitive. If lost for words, just point. INSET: The capture of a suspected Taliban fighter by British and Afghan forces

"I said to him that during my 40 years of life I'd wanted to write but had never found the right subject. Then I said that looking at you I've found someone who I know people will find interesting – because I certainly do."

The pair exchanged contact details and six months later Mr Gomm got an email from Capt Beattie.

Candid

"It turned out that when he got home, back to Northern Ireland, Doug found he couldn't talk about his experiences to his wife, but he started to write them down so she could read them," said Mr Gomm.

"It was she who suggested he contact the person who'd said he was interested in writing a book, so I got a load of documents and notes to look at. Doug is so candid, honest and emotional – he's a dream for a writer. You don't have to prise things out. He didn't mind admitting he had cried and had nightmares about what he had seen and done.

"In a broader way it was beneficial and cathartic for him to get things out. Other soldiers returning from combat don't have that outlet and can bottle up things. Five or 10 years later that can cause real problems."

The book ended up selling 60,000 copies. Capt Beattie was all set to leave the Army, but then received a phone call.

"This was in 2008 and his commanding officer asked him to train some of the younger recruits and work with Afghan police and soldiers," said Mr Gomm.

His experiences have just been published in the second book, again in collaboration with Mr Gomm.

It recounts 50 engagements with the Taliban and horrific incidents such as the death of a child by a British mortar shell, and UK forces working alongside Afghan soldiers who murdered a Taliban prisoner.

It also recounts Afghan soldiers displaying the body parts of a suicide bomber as a warning to other insurgents.

WRECKED: Aftermath of striking a mine

Mr Gomm said: "I feel Doug got harder on his second tour. The first time he took a life – in 2006 – it affected him deeply, but he got hardened to it.

"But he had become a grandfather to Tristan in the meantime and the suffering and pain of the civilians he was meant to be there to help affected him greatly on his second tour – particularly children.

"He recognised there were many good Afghan soldiers and policemen, but felt also the locals have a history of deceit, bribery, corruption and express their main loyalty to local warlords. There was a saying, he told me: 'You can rent an Afghan, but you can never buy him'."

Capt Beattie is now retired from the Army but still is active in the TA and Royal British Legion in his home town of Portadown.

Compassionate

He said: "I wrote honestly from a soldier's point of view and Phil did a brilliant job of turning it into language people could understand.

"He was compassionate in the way he would allow me to explain things. I felt colder when I left Afghanistan in 2008. I wasn't blasé, but I was certainly harder towards it all."

Mr Gomm said he would relish the chance to work with Doug once more.

"I'd like to do another book – I'd like to go back to Afghanistan as well," he said.

• ***Both An Ordinary Soldier and Task Force Helmand are available through Simon and Schuster publishers. Recommended retail price for the hardback editions is £17.99, although the books are cheaper in many stores.***

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but MP fears worst with the increase in number of US soldiers

'The problem isn't that we haven't enough troops; it's they have been operating with the wrong strategy'

BARACK Obama's decision to send 30,000 extra troops to Afghanistan will only increase the level of violence there, claims an influential Tory MP, ***writes Steve Knight***.

Gulf War veteran Adam Holloway – a member of the Commons' defence committee – returned from a week-long trip to Kabul on Thursday and said the US President's actions may end up causing more harm than good.

The Gravesham MP has visited Afghanistan at his own expense every year since being elected in 2005, and told KOS Media he had begun to notice a worrying trend.

He said: "If you were to make a graph of the violence in the country, it would directly correlate to a graph of the number of foreign troops there.

"When we talk about the Taliban we think they're all fighting us for the same purpose, but only about five or 10 per cent are the old crazies.

"The vast majority are fighting because they don't like the presence of foreign troops in their areas and because they don't like the Afghan government.

"We don't have a structure containing the sort of people who would do what needs to be done over there.

"We have huge military barracks and Army headquarters, but there's no huge hangar full of people working on specific little areas and identifying leaders and villagers and getting out and talking to them.

THINK AGAIN: MP Adam Holloway feels President Obama's strategy is all wrong

"If you already have military forces then the easy option is to throw more military forces at them, but it's actually making things worse."

There are currently about 100,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan, including about 9,000 from the UK. Late last month Gordon Brown announced he would be sending a further 500 to help the war effort, while Nato announced on Friday that at least 7,000 allied soldiers from various counties would also be flying in.

Mr Holloway is a former Grenadier Guards officer who fought in the first Gulf War and was an ITN reporter at the start of the second.

The 44-year-old says he believes there are three key elements to winning the conflict in Afghanistan, the first of which is to ensure President Hamid Karzai runs a government that is free from corruption.

He also feels a series of local deals need to be made with reconcilable Taliban leaders, and the American government must put pressure on Pakistan and India to resolve their differences and therefore stop Pakistan turning a blind eye to the fighting on its borders.

Mr Holloway said: "If those three things aren't done then yes, the extra troops sent in will only make things worse.

"It's awful to hear Gordon Brown and Barack Obama talking about dates for troops to leave. I want to win this, but the problem isn't that we haven't enough troops; it's that they have been operating with the wrong strategy.

"This war really matters to places like Gravesend and Northfleet because we want to make terrorist attacks over here less likely, not more, so we have to get it right."

A 'homecoming' gig from Keane

BRIT-award winning band Keane have become the second act to announce a gig at a special woodland venue in the heart of Kent.

The band, who have had three consecutive number one albums, will play at Bedgebury Pinetum and Forest, near Goudhurst, on Friday, June 11, 2010, as part of the Forestry Commission Live Music Series.

Members Tom Chaplin, Tim Rice-Oxley and Richard Hughes, who all attended Tonbridge School, have dubbed it their "homecoming" gig.

They will take to the stage ahead of the soulful Mick Hucknall with Simply Red who are playing on Saturday, June 12.

Tickets to see Keane cost £32, subject to booking fee, and are available from the ticket hotline 01842 814612 or www.forestry.gov.uk/music or www.keanemusic.com.

Couple pay price for memory loss

A HUSBAND and wife have been fined and given six penalty points each for failing to provide the identify of a driver at the time of a speeding offence.

A car registered to Rebecca Streek, 42, of Belvedere Road, Faversham, was photographed by the Pin Hill speed camera in Canterbury travelling at 42mph in a 30mph limit on January 11.

Mrs Streek nominated her husband as the driver of the car after she was sent a penalty notice. But Stephen Streek, 44, said must have been his wife at the wheel.

Both of them ended up in court and they admitted a charge of failing to identify the driver of a vehicle at the time of an offence.

Each received fines of £350 and court costs of £50.

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LONELY BURDEN: Businessman Michael Bollom pictured on the memorial bench to his late son James, and right, the teenager was the best man at his father's wedding

A father's grief becomes a cry from the heart

A GRIEVING father has written a book about coping with the death of his teenage son and the tragic suicide of his ex-wife who could not face life without her boy.

By **MARIJKE COX**
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

In his book, Losing James – A Father Cries Too, Michael Bollom gives a candid account of how he dealt with the double tragedy that tore his world apart.

The 50-year-old, from Bearsted, near Maidstone, recalled the moment on December 4, 2005, that he found out his 16-year-old son James was dead.

"I felt a complete numbness," he said. "My life fell apart. I didn't really know what was going on for those first few months."

James was killed in a car crash in Wateringbury, near Maidstone, a month short of his 17th birthday. He had been a passenger in a speeding car that went out of control and hit an oncoming vehicle.

Mr Bollom, a director of a manufacturing company in Sittingbourne, said: "James died instantly. His side of the car took the full impact of the crash.

"Losing someone through the fault of somebody else feels even worse.

"The driver was done for dangerous driving and was sentenced to two years and three months in prison, but some of that was spent on probation. The penalty didn't seem to take into account that a life was lost."

SO POPULAR: Hundreds attended James's funeral

But things got worse for Mr Bollom when, just three months after the fatal crash that killed his son, his ex-wife Samantha took her own life.

"She couldn't cope with life without James," he said. "They had a very good relationship; they were best friends. She just couldn't go on without him."

James shared his time between his parents, but spent the majority with his mother.

Mr Bollom said: "Samantha and I had a good relationship. When she died it was like reliving the whole experience of James's death again."

Asked whether he had considered suicide himself, Mr Bollom said: "When you lose a child, of course you think, 'What's the point?' But I was fortunate to have a strong network around me, including my wife of 10 years. But Samantha felt she couldn't carry on."

In his book, Mr Bollom talks about how he sought solace in the spiritual realm through a medium. He admitted that prior to the tragedy he was sceptical about spiritual life, but now believes he would not have got through his grief without it.

"It was able to show me that no matter what, James is always there," he said.

"There were things the medium knew that were so accurate, things only James and I would know. I talk about this in the book, but only as my opinion. I don't want to preach to people about how to deal with their grief."

A main factor in Mr Bollom's book is that it deals with the grief of a father.

"It is rare for a book like this to be written by a man," he said.

"Most are written from a female perspective, but I think it's very important to see that fathers suffer too.

"They have to carry on and be strong for others and in a way they have a harder job because they are trying to deal with their grief while carrying on as normal. It's hard to see a mother grieving for a lost child, but at times fathers are somewhat forgotten when their grief is just as bad.

"No parent should have to bury a child."

Money raised from sales of the book – which took 15 months to write – is going to a charity to help people dealing with bereavement. Mr Bollom said he was looking into which charity to choose.

He added: "I miss James, we were close. He was best man at my wedding.

"He was always smiling and liked by everyone. There were 450 people at his funeral, all of different ages.

"Writing this book has helped me cope with his death. I hope it will help others who have lost someone close."

• ***Losing James – A Father Cries Too, is available at £7.99 by contacting Michael Oke at Bound Biographies on 01869 232911. Alternatively, email mike@boundbiographies.com.***

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Doctor warns of booze time-bomb being primed by supermarkets

BOOZE from supermarkets needs to be priced out of the reach of more people if Britain is to defuse an alcohol time-bomb, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

That's the opinion of an academic who claims that if we continue to drink as much as we are now, in two decades the death rate from alcohol will be overwhelming.

Dr John Foster, from the University of Greenwich, carried out the research for the Alcohol Education and Research Council.

He said: "The effects of continually drinking too much takes about 20 years to take hold. So the death rates from drinking we are seeing now are the result of what happened two decades ago.

"But we're richer than we were 20 years ago and drinking more. Not at the pub, but at home, and that appears to be worse because we are almost doing it in secret.

"Supermarkets are now at the forefront of alcohol sales. Off licences and pubs are going out of business, so most alcohol is being purchased at the supermarkets.

"They are making astounding offers to boost sales, which means we are drinking more and more alcohol. The effects will be felt in 20 years and if we keep increasing the rate at which we are drinking, the death rate then will be massive."

Dr Foster, from the university's school of health and social care, lives in Beckenham.

He wants action taken now to price booze beyond the reach of more people, including youngsters. He wants higher pricing, increased taxes and greater controls on supermarkets.

He said: "Alcohol-related illness and death is on the rise, predominantly with liver disease in older men.

"Estimated per capita consumption in 1988 was 9.99 litres of pure alcohol. Figures for 2007-08 estimate the figure to be 11.53.

"Much of this is drinking that takes place in the home. Some 84 per cent of all wine consumed is off-sales, according to the British Beer and Pub Association.

CONCERN: Dr John Foster

"In essence, unlike cigarettes, alcohol consumption has an elastic demand which means the cheaper it is, the more will be consumed.

"People would drink less if it cost more. Minimal effective price increases, on average, would cost the 'sensible drinker' about £10 more per year, which is the price of a round of drinks. And yes, I do drink myself."

Dr Foster is now working on a new project, on the Isle of Sheppey, mapping young people's problems with alcohol and drugs.

His study found adults and young people perceive drinking at home as routine and normal, which is likely to lead to increased consumption in certain groups.

Those interviewed said the main attractions of home drinking was "lack of surveillance" and "freedom to drink as they wished".

Adults cited the convenience, including price, safety, availability of childcare, family occasions, the smoking ban, and not having to drink and drive.

Dr Foster argues society is wrong to focus on problems created by young binge drinkers, rather than the longer-term risks of drinking at home.

The principal research fellow in mental health nursing said: "Supermarkets continue to present the majority of their consumers as responsible. They are just normalising the purchase of a drug that over time is likely to have major health costs."

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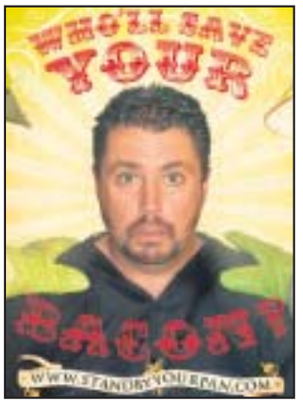

SCREEN SHOT: Still from video

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A LIGHT-hearted short film made by Kent firefighters carries a deadly warning, and is set to become a global hit.

Stand By Your Pan is a parody of the Tammy Wynette song Stand By Your Man, and it could save your bacon this festive season.

It shows a drunk coming home from a boozy night out. He staggers in, starts cooking some bacon, and falls asleep in front of the TV while the pan overheats and ignites, filling the rooms with lethal smoke.

COUNTRY STAR: Tammy Wynette

But he is saved by two 'fire angels' who pop up from behind his settee to wake him up and sing the common sense packed ditty, with the chorus 'Stand by your pan and show the world you love it. Give it all the care you can, stand by your pan'.

The short online film is being used to capture the attention of forgetful cooks this festive season and appeared on YouTube last week.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service said the video was made as a response to shocking figures that highlight the risk to those who get peckish after a few drinks.

The service said the light-hearted approach was intended to make people think when they start cooking at the end of a night out.

Disaster

Statistics show one in every three fire deaths is drink-related, and the majority of accidental domestic fires begin in the kitchen, with just two breaths of fire smoke able to knock someone out. A house fire can double in size every 30 seconds.

At the end of the three-minute film is the key message that fire angels do not leap out from behind the sofa and save people.

Fire service head of community safety Stuart Skilton said: "Leaving cooking unattended is a recipe for disaster and if you've been drinking you're even more vulnerable.

"Despite the proverb 'a watched pot never boils', keeping a close eye on your cooking really will save your life.

"Whether you've had a few drinks or not, our advice to cooks is quite simply Stand By Your Pan."

The video was written and produced by Kent Fire and Rescue Service's communications team, and stars watch manager Andy Biggington in the role of the saved man.

Visit www.standbyyourpan.com to view the film.

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High-flyer Laura drops in to lend a hand

DELIVERS: Laura Westley

By **CHRIS MURPHY**

PILOT Laura Westley is getting set to take on some of the world's most dangerous areas to land vital aid for people in need.

She is about to take to the skies and head to trouble spots with the Mission Aviation Fellowship, known as MAF.

Based in Folkestone, the organisation has just acquired a new, specially designed Kodiak 100 plane. It will be used to deliver relief, and medical and emergency supplies, to some of the most remote places on the globe.

The revolutionary aircraft is the latest edition to the 120 fleet of light aircraft operated by the Christian organisation.

The new plane was unveiled at Lydd Airport this week before it sets off for Indonesia to join seven others operated by MAF there. The country has dense rain forests, mountains and rivers, and many parts of the Kalimantan region remain isolated. People have little or no access to basic facilities like healthcare and education.

Laura, 42, who has adopted two Ugandan children now aged six, said: "I am more scared driving home than landing in unusual locations."

The former air traffic controller said: "I have been flying with MAF for five years and started flying in 1990.

"I learned to fly because I wanted to work with MAF after reading of the amazing work they do. I did three years in the Air Force as a controller and my dad was always mad about planes.

Intelligence

"With MAF I have been to Uganda, Sudan, Congo, and Mongolia and am now set to go back to Africa, probably Kenya. We tend to go to places where no-one else is willing to visit. There is always a greater amount of risk to our flights, but we use a lot of intelligence on the ground and will have a military escort when things get too risky.

"The work is so variable. I have taken doctors to places where they do eye surgery, and delivered supplies to tackle an ebola outbreak, medical evacuations, security evacuations – there is never a dull moment. The plane carries nine passengers, so it can get really busy."

The aircraft was donated by Isle of Man-based AFD Software Ltd. The bush aircraft has a higher payload and range and runs on cheaper jet fuel.

MAF has been operating since 1945, working to overcome barriers in some of the world's poorest nations.

For more information about MAF and its aircraft, visit www.maf-uk.org/kodiak.

Gills get the blues over sax protest

SEVERE traffic caused by a saxophone-playing rooftop protester threw Gillingham FC's League One preparations into chaos on Tuesday night.

The side had only seven available players and no kit less than an hour before their match at Leyton Orient, as police closed the A12 in south London and attempted to talk the man down.

Fortunately the Gills had enough players to field a full team by kick-off, but had to play in their hosts' away strip and ended up losing 3-1.

The protestor, who had been throwing roof tiles onto the road, finally came down just after midnight following a nine-hour stand-off and was arrested.

Robber's 'sip up' a costly mistake

AN ARMED robber who left his DNA on a coffee cup has been jailed for five years.

Thomas Warner, 23, from Orpington, used a monkey wrench to threaten staff at the M20 Maidstone service station on August 23, and had drunk from the cup before carrying out the crime.

Warner was sentenced at Maidstone Crown Court after admitting a further three robberies, an attempted car theft, theft from vehicles, and making off without paying for fuel.

Investigating officer Gary Stamp said: "His DNA linked him directly to the crime, and after being arrested he pleaded guilty to all the other offences he carried out on the same day."

Rhyme and reason at root of couple's book

A HUSBAND and wife team want to make nursery rhymes popular once again – and it appears they are winning the battle, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

The traditional rhymes have slowly disappeared over the decades and an onslaught of political correctness claimed they were indecent, unfair and even racist.

Little Miss Muffet and Other Rhymes is the title of the couple's third and latest book which aims to take the nursery rhymes right back to where they used to belong – the classroom and homes of young children eager to learn.

Ann and Peter Scott run their publishing company PatrickGeorge from home in Ramsgate, where they live with their three children George, nine, Laura, seven, and Patrick, four.

Peter does the artwork, and Ann comes up with the words, but in truth, they share many of the ideas.

Ann said: "Who said the nursery rhyme is on its way out? Little Miss Muffet is our third book and with it we are attempting to breathe new life into a traditional format and create a bit of enthusiasm using our contemporary and compelling designs.

"As well as ideal Christmas gifts, we would love to see all the books back in schools to encourage creative thinking and promote visual literacy in young children."

There have been recent controversies over the political correctness of some rhymes for children.

The BBC changed the ending of Humpty Dumpty so the King's men and horses could put him back together again and it was reported some schools used rainbow sheep in Baa Baa Black Sheep.

But Ann said they use both in their book with original wording, and added: "We don't subscribe to this political correctness really – and black sheep do exist. We believe there is nothing racist about a black sheep and a rainbow sheep, as I have read, is utterly nonsensical – surely?

"If we had to change the words to Humpty Dumpty then that would not affect our illustration, but so far no customers have picked up on this issue and we are targeting our rhymes more at schools than nurseries, if that helps.

"I personally don't believe there will be much take-up on this. There is more angry backlash with people trying to mess around with tradition than not."

Amazed

Their first two publications, A Drove of Bullocks, and A Filth of Starlings, have already done well having been sold in Waterstone's, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Whitechapel Art Gallery, and many bookshops.

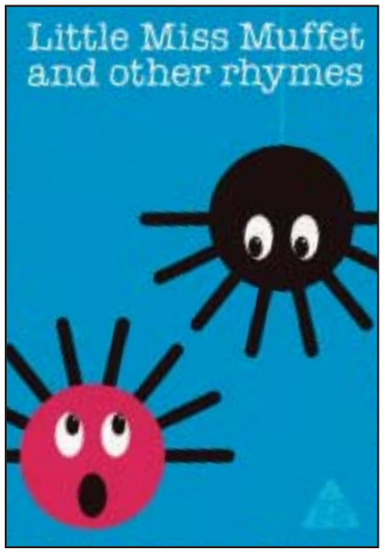
Starlings has just been nominated for the Kate Greenaway Award for outstanding illustration in books for children and young people.

Ann said: "Our ideas for books started about two years ago after visiting an animal sanctuary with our kids. We started to think about the different collective nouns for animals that we knew and how we could illustrate them. Delving further, we were amazed at just how many unknown, quirky and appealing names exist.

"Over a year later, we created PatrickGeorge, graphic design and publishing team and launched A Drove of Bullocks and A Filth of Starlings which are compilations of animal collective nouns, and is read by the whole family from eight to 80.

"Little Miss Muffet and Other Rhymes has rhymes that can be played on fingers and toes, sung out loud and looked at again and again."

For more information on the books visit www.patrickgeorge.biz.



WRITE ON: Peter and Ann and the new book

Should you be raising a stink over unfair bills for sewerage?

WATER customers living on the coast or near rivers have been warned to check they are not paying for services they do not receive.

A report on the BBC consumer programme Rip-Off Britain revealed this week that homeowners may be accepting surface water charges – which cover the cost of removing rainwater that runs into a sewerage company's drains – even if said water flows from their homes into rivers or the sea.

Firms are required by law to offer rebates to customers who do not require the service, but the onus is on the customer to prove they are entitled to get their money back.

Karen Gibbs, policy manager for the Consumer Council for Water in the South East, urged customers to look over their bills carefully.

She said: "It should be possible to do a quick check to see where the drainage is going. If it's not going back into the sewers then it's worth giving the company a call to find out if you are eligible for a rebate. Entire blocks of flats have successfully applied in the past."

The issue was raised by Rip-Off Britain in response to a grievance aired to the BBC by Southern Water customer Bob Holtom, who lives in a block of flats on the Sussex coast.

Mr Holtom said he received a rebate for his surface water charge, but was angry when told by the firm that his neighbours would all have to apply individually.

A Southern Water spokesman told the show: "We should have been more active and contacted other residents sooner. We apologise and have now agreed to pay the rebates they were entitled to."

Picture: BRITISH CARTOON ARCHIVE

GIGGLE: A cartoon by Carl Giles, for the 1980 Christmas dinner menu of the Saints and Sinners Club

Light-hearted look at age-old bad behaviour

CARTOONS from the British archive were dusted off for an exhibition on how bad behaviour has changed throughout the centuries.

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

The event at the University of Kent's Templeman Library on Thursday featured illustrations dating back 200 years, along with more recent artwork such as saucy seaside postcards deemed too obscene for sale back in the 1950s and 60s.

Organiser Diane Heath – a postgraduate student at the Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies – tied the exhibition in with a conference based on the subject of bad behaviour that was held on the same day.

She said: "We were considering various ways of covering transgressions through history, but I felt they all seemed very dry. We thought we needed something that had a lot more impact and our eyes just lit up when we came up with the idea of bad behaviour.

Problems

"I've been talking to people about bad behaviour in schools and it always brings back fond memories of some of the naughty things people got up to back in the day.

"For instance, one of the professors was telling me how he and his friends used to use rulers to fire ink pellets across the classroom at one another.

"That's why it's so interesting to look at what people got up to years ago, because many of the problems of the past still exist in society today."

Located inside the Templeman Library, the British Cartoon Archive was established in 1973, to collect and preserve illustrations of social and political comment and make them freely available to study.

Mrs Heath said she walks past the collection every day on her way to buy lunch, and that it would have been "criminal" not to use them as part of the conference.

In addition, a one-night exhibition was also held at Canterbury Cathedral Archives, which contain paperwork dating back hundreds of years including documents about a man who was prosecuted in the 15th century for walking a bear along the city battlements.

Mrs Heath is also planning a series of outreach events to local groups and schools based on the subject of bad behaviour.

She said: "The problems between the medieval era and today are different. The past does not repeat itself, but there are good and bad points to how times have changed.

"In lots of ways medieval Britain was a much more violent and scary place to live, but in other ways behaviour we find difficult to put up with now was tolerated a lot more by people back then.

"They were also keener to prosecute and litigate people for transgressions than we are today."

Buzz surrounding new academy

BRITAIN'S first beekeeping academy is opening to boost the fading numbers of the honey-making insects.

It will be near the home of organiser Jean Mozley in Newington, near Folkestone, and will open at the end of January.

She said: "There is great interest in the plight of our honey bees at the moment and I aim to do something about it.

"More beekeepers are needed to set up hives, and I can help teach would-be new keepers all they need to know."

It could even be fair to say Jean has a bee in her bonnet about the declining bee population in the UK.

A self-employed beekeeper for the last 30 years, Jean suffered a painful condition in 2008 that forced her out of the business.

She has acute pancreatitis causing inflammation of the pancreas and severe abdominal pain.

She said: "I did get the condition under control with a change in my diet, and now I want to get back to my first love, beekeeping."

But she needed help, so she teamed up with Enham's Self Employment team and its Business Ability Programme.

Fascinating

Established in 1918, Enham is a leading regional charity dedicated to providing services for people with disabilities, tailored to their individual needs and abilities.

Jean said: "My idea for a beekeeping academy was welcomed by them and now it will be the first in the country.

"The art of beekeeping is fascinating. Students will learn about pollination, how to keep bees safely, and understand the rudiments of bee behaviour.

"As a bee breeder, I'll also be able to sell queen bees to newly-qualified beekeepers."

Alice Holloway, Enham's business advisor in Kent, said: "Jean has impressed me with her experience in bee keeping and her passion for sharing her knowledge with newcomers to the bee industry."

Bees have been in decline across the globe and particularly in Europe.

That poses a major threat not just to honey production but to the pollination of plants leading to food production.

• ***For more information on the beekeeping academy contact Jean at bees4u@tiscali.co.uk.***

BEE FIRST: Britain's first beekeeping academy, near Folkestone, aims to reignite interest in a dying art

RSPB pecks at plans for bird protection site

By **MARIJKE COX**
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

PLANS to turn a marine site off the coast into a conservation area have come in for criticism from a national charity.

Experts from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) said proposals outlining the Outer Thames Estuary as a potential protected site are too limited.

The area, which runs from Ramsgate up the north coast, was shortlisted last week with 11 others to become a new Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under European Law.

The potential sites chosen will be protected from fishing, recreation and the oil and gas industries.

The Kent site was selected to help protect the wintering population of red-throated diver birds.

Breeding

But the RSPB believes proposals for the Outer Thames Estuary – drawn up by Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee – fail to recognise all the bird species in need of protection other than the red-throated diver.

Dr Mark Avery, the RSPB's director of conservation, said: "The UK is hugely important for seabirds.

"Every summer eight million of them come to our coasts to breed and while their breeding colonies are protected, the areas of sea where they feed and spend the majority of their lives are not.

"The boundaries have been drawn in the right place to cover those areas most important to birds.

"However, it is well known the Outer Thames Estuary hosts equally important numbers of other species that, as it stands, the designations do not cover.

"That means the loss of large numbers of birds to development or commercial activity could be permitted even though the area is a Special Protection Area (SPA), simply because it was not designated with those species in mind.

"Properly designated SPAs can ensure our seas are managed for wildlife and people."

Consultations on the chosen sites are already underway between Natural England and its partners and following these, proposals will be submitted to the Government.

Ministers will then decide on which areas to submit to the European Commission in 2010.

Margate and Longsands off the coast of Thanet was also chosen due to its subtidal sandbanks that provide undersea habitats for numerous species.

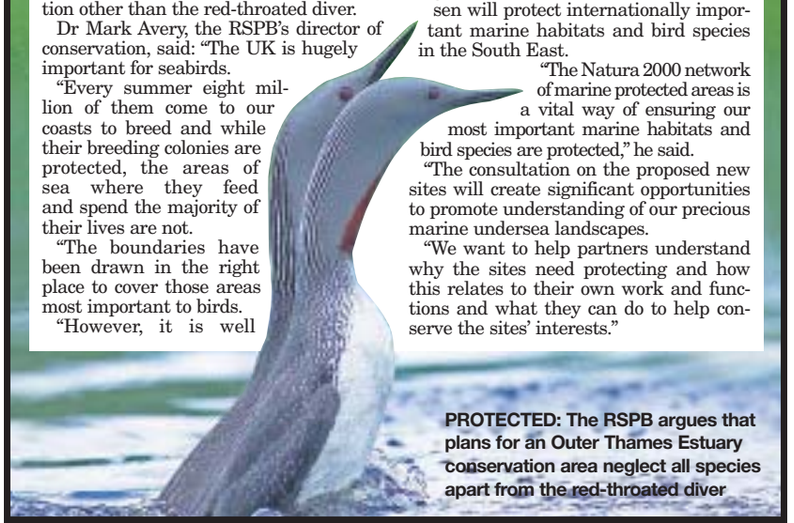
If plans go ahead the two South East sites will form part of the Natura 2000 network – the group of terrestrial and marine areas designated for preservation under European legislation

Alan Law, regional director for Natural England, said he believes the areas chosen will protect internationally important marine habitats and bird species in the South East.

"The Natura 2000 network of marine protected areas is a vital way of ensuring our most important marine habitats and bird species are protected," he said.

"The consultation on the proposed new sites will create significant opportunities to promote understanding of our precious marine undersea landscapes.

"We want to help partners understand why the sites need protecting and how this relates to their own work and functions and what they can do to help conserve the sites' interests."



PROTECTED: The RSPB argues that plans for an Outer Thames Estuary conservation area neglect all species apart from the red-throated diver

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The 20-year plan for your journey to work

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

MOTORISTS, bus users and rail commuters are being asked for their views on a 20-year transport strategy for Kent.

Cyclists and pedestrians will also have their say on the 'Growth without gridlock' publication, which documents a range of proposals aimed at freeing up the county's roads for the benefit of its people and the local economy.

Proposals include the long-awaited Lower Thames Crossing to take the pressure off the existing Dartford crossing, and the building of several new roads and railway stations.

The strategy also looks at how Kent can take full advantage of High Speed One – the Channel Tunnel rail link service that launches for real next Sunday, December 13, following months of test-runs.

County councillor Nick Chard – cabinet member for highways – described the plans as a "high-level jigsaw to take Kent well into the 21st century and beyond".

He told KOS Media: "This strategy recognises that we have growth areas in the county like Kent Thameside and Ashford, as well as the promise of extra houses and increased freight transport from Dover and the Channel Tunnel.

"It's about giving people real choice for different forms of transport while looking at how we can achieve growth without gridlock.

FAST TRACK: Bullet trains are part of future

"What with advancements such as High Speed One (HS1) and the Fastrack bus service in Dartford, the timing is right to get a strategy for the whole of Kent, and I think having such a framework is very important for the quality of life of our residents.

"Many of us rely on transport to get to work, school, the hospital and so on, so this strategy will have a big impact on a lot of people."

The strategy, which will be open for consultation until the end of February, lists five key elements that will be targeted over the next 20 years including new infrastructure, making public transport travel easier and developing more Fastrack-type services.

In addition to well-publicised schemes such as the proposed lorry park at Aldington that would remove the need for Operation Stack, the document also lists numerous other plans to improve traffic flow throughout Kent.

These include the dualling of the A21 in the west of the county, capacity improvements to the A2 Bean interchange near Bluewater shopping centre, and the use of the hard shoulder in peak periods on the M25 and M20.

Another key element of the strategy is about maximising the benefits of HS1, which will allow commuters to travel from Ashford to London in just 37 minutes and from Dartford and Gravesend in less than 20.

One proposal would see the building of two new railway stations in Thanet and Maidstone, while existing sites at Westenhanger, near Folkestone, and Appledore, on the Romney Marsh, would be given major upgrades.

Cllr Chard said: "It's important we recognise that HS1 will make an enormous difference to the people who can gain access to the line and the uptake during the trial period has been very, very good.

"Although it will be slightly more expensive to use – about £8 a day – many people have said they will happily trade that off for an extra hour in bed or an extra hour at home with the children after work. One hour seems to be the limit for a reasonable commute time to London and HS1 will now increase that catchment area dramatically."

Visit www.kent.gov.uk for more information on the 'Growth without gridlock' strategy.

Crossing sale will not affect second bridge

MOTORISTS concerned about the sale of the Dartford crossing have been assured it will not affect plans for a second bridge over the Thames.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown wants to raise £16 billion to reduce the Treasury's large budget deficit and earlier this year put the crossing forward as part of a portfolio of "non-financial assets" he would be prepared to offload to the private sector.

The news sparked concern among motorists who feared such a move would signal the end of plans for a second Lower Thames Crossing.

Gordon Telling, of the Tunbridge Wells-based Freight Transport Association, said at the time: "If I was an investor planning to buy the existing one I would want to be promised first that a new one wasn't going to be built."

However, Kent County Council revealed this week the authority had been told by Transport Secretary Lord Adonis that both crossings could be sold to a third party as one single asset.

Cabinet member for highways Cllr Nick Chard said: "We are not sure about the exact detail of what any sale of the Dartford crossing would mean and would like to understand that better, but the bottom line is that it cannot cope with the unprecedented demand of traffic.

"I think there's recognition from both the Government and ourselves that something needs to be done because the crossing is at or very close to capacity. We are looking some years ahead in regards to a second crossing, but something needs to be looked at and planned now."

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By MARIJKE COX
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

Rape victim speaks out to urge other abused women to ask for help

A YOUNG woman has recalled the horrifying moment she was raped by her mother's boyfriend.

Helen, 19, [not her real name] said that by speaking out during Rape Awareness Week she hoped more victims would come forward.

"There are so many people out there being abused or raped who are too scared to say anything," she said.

"I was sexually abused when I was 12 years old by my mother's boyfriend. They had been together for nine years – I thought of him as my stepfather, even though they weren't married.

"He was always very violent towards my mother, but he never hurt me. But when my mum started working more – she also began having an affair – she was out of the house a lot. On one of these occasions he raped me. It only happened once, because I told my mum straight away and she reported it to the police."

Helen's abuser was convicted and sentenced to three years in prison, but was released early on good behaviour.

"It was very difficult when he was released," she admitted.

"Fortunately he was in Hull, which is where we lived when my mother was with him, but we had moved back to Kent after the rape.

"I was finding the ordeal very hard to cope with. I think I was in denial for a long time.

"It was hard to come to terms with and I had a lot of nightmares – I still do sometimes."

Helen had been looking for a job when she came across Connexions, a service in Kent offering advice to young people.

"I began seeing a counsellor and I was referred to Family Matters earlier this year," she said.

Family Matters, in Gravesend, helps victims of rape and sexual abuse from across the county.

The charity has recently received Government funding for the county's first-ever Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) after a successful bid made in partnership with the Kent Criminal Justice Board.

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission has also agreed funding for a Young Persons ISVA, who will provide tailored support for children who have suffered rape or sexual abuse.

Helen said: "Family Matters is great. The help I received really got to the source of the problem.

"They helped me answer a lot of questions about why the rape happened and I dealt with what actually happened to me.

"I have my bad days, but I've got a lot better since I went to Family Matters. I still struggle with trusting men and my boyfriend, and I find that hard. I'm also not interested in any kind of sexual relationship.

Shocking

"But generally, I feel like I've got my life back.

"I hope that by speaking out and telling people about the help that's out there other victims may come forward."

Malcolm Gilbert, operations director at Family Matters, revealed the shocking figures of rape cases in the county.

"Of the 100 rape victims we saw last year, one third were aged between 12 and 16, including one boy," he said. "This year we are likely to see more than 200, and the proportion of youngsters remains the same."

A large number of rape cases, however, go unreported.

Mr Gilbert added: "A properly-supported rape victim is far more likely to go to court and give evidence and therefore increase the conviction rate for this dreadful crime."

Rebecca Macey, the North West Kent and Medway ISVA at Family Matters, said: "This is about giving tailored support to very vulnerable victims and making sure they get what they need to recover from the trauma of sexual violence."

As part of the National Rape Awareness campaign, a series of hard-hitting adverts showing rape from a man and woman's perspective, are being shown on television.

Kent Police is backing the move and is distributing posters to licensed premises across the county to help promote the campaign.

Det Supt Paul Fotheringham, head of Kent Police's public protection unit, said: "No consent means no sex.

"We take all allegations of rape extremely seriously and people are treated in confidence.

"We encourage people to report offences at the earliest opportunity. Rape ruins lives."

For help and advice visit www.familymattersuk.org or www.kent.police.uk.

To see this clip search 'Rape' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

Police have launched a new campaign aimed at reducing the risk of becoming a potential victim of rape over Christmas

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Ofwat 'too soft on companies' pricing plans'

REGULATOR Ofwat has been accused of relaxing its grip on water companies after giving them the green light to increase bills.

Customers throughout the county will now pay more than was initially expected when the industry regulator published its draft responses to firms' five-year business plans in July.

Back then, the five companies serving Kent were told to slash bills by up to 10 per cent, but now all but one – Veolia Water Southeast – have been given permission to put them up.

David Bland, chairman of the Consumer Council for Water (CCW) in the South East, said he was disappointed Ofwat had accepted the charges.

He voiced particular concern for customers receiving water and sewerage services from Southern Water, who were expecting a two per cent reduction in their bills but instead face a five per cent increase to £393 by 2015.

Mr Bland said: "This is beyond what many customers told us they found acceptable.

"In its draft proposal Ofwat was putting pressure on the company to be more efficient.

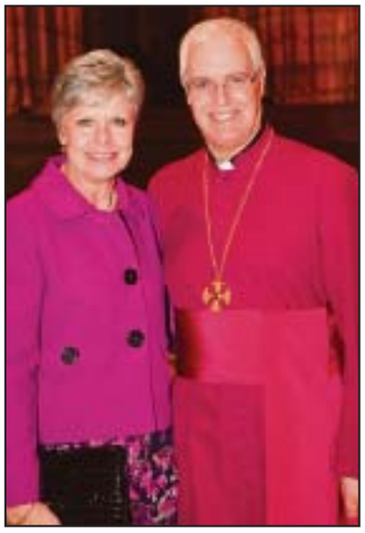
"Ofwat is choosing to relax its grip, but sending varying messages on price is not fair to customers, and they will not welcome paying more than the regulator's initial estimate."

The CCW has also raised concern about South East Water's bills, which will rise three per cent to £174 instead of the expected six per cent reduction to £160.

And although Veolia Water Southeast – formerly Folkestone and Dover Water – has slashed bills by two per cent to £181, this is still some way off the 10 per cent drop Ofwat initially requested.

Sutton and East Surrey Water – which covers a small area of north-east Kent – has been given the OK to raise bills by one per cent to £167, while Thames Water's will go up by three per cent to £313.

Bishop on the frontline in a new role with our troops



MOVING ON: Bishop Stephen Venner and his wife Judy bid farewell to his old post

By MARIJKE COX

SUPPORT for our Armed Forces is vital as more and more soldiers are killed on the frontline, says the new Bishop to the Forces.

The Rt Revd Dr Stephen Venner spoke to KOS Media after hundreds of people turned out to bid him farewell from his post as Bishop of Dover and Bishop in Canterbury.

Part of his new role as Bishop to the Forces – given to him by the Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams – will be travelling to Afghanistan to give support to chaplains helping soldiers coping with the traumas of war.

Bishop Stephen said: "What happens for most people when they are faced with someone they love dying, or the fear of dying themselves, is they start asking religious questions.

"These are questions such as what life is about, is there life after death, how important are they or how important were the people who died.

"Chaplains, like local vicars, are there to support people when they are going through difficult times or dealing with traumatic moments.

"A bishop must be there to support the chaplains, which is what I'm doing."

Bishop Stephen, who has now moved from the Canterbury diocese to Rochester, has retired from his role as Bishop of Dover and Bishop in Canterbury after 10 years.

His official retirement falls at the end of December and the Rt Revd Trevor Wilmott will take over in February next year.

Tributes

A ceremony was held at Canterbury Cathedral on Saturday where the clergy, church members and the Lord Lieutenant and the Lord Mayor of Canterbury paid tribute to Bishop Stephen.

The Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams described him as "a person of humanity, quality, intelligence and humility" and said their friendship had been "very real and significant personally".

Bishop Stephen said: "It was an extremely emotional service. I was, of course, very moved by the Archbishop's words. I've said many times before that the relationship between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of Dover has to be a good one.

"I've always found that our relationship was good, but for him to say it so publicly was very special."

The Bishop of Dover runs the Canterbury diocese while the Archbishop is away on national and international church business.

Bishop Stephen said: "The two really have to trust and support each other.

"Archbishop Rowan said it's almost like he's the grandparent and I'm the parent. We'd laugh together, but there were times when he had to be strict."

Rosalind Turner, managing director for children, families and education at Kent County Council, also paid tribute at the service.

She said Bishop Stephen had "led from the front" and praised him for his work as a founding member of the Kent Children's Trust, as first pro-chancellor of Christ Church University and his work with the Kent Strategic Partnership.

The 65-year-old and his family have now moved out of their home in Canterbury and into a house in Rochester.

"Once a Bishop retires he can't live in the same diocese," he said. "This is because if you're living next door-but-one to the new Bishop it would be very hard for people in the diocese to give 100 per cent to the new Bishop."

But despite being sad to leave Canterbury, Bishop Stephen said he had great faith in Mr Wilmott.

"We know each other well," he said.

"If there was any advice I would give him, I would recall advice given to me when I started, which was 'just love them'.

"It's short but sweet, and hugely profound. If the diocese feels the Bishop loves them they will love him too."

An announcement was made at Downing Street on October 5 that the Mr Wilmott would take over as Bishop of Dover. Bishop Trevor said he was very privileged to have been chosen by the Archbishop for the role.

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Winter really is a wonderful time to explore the nature around you, walking over crunchy pathways through the bare wintertime trees and past pretty frozen lake-tops.

So Nature Valley is inviting you to join in the Ramblers Festival of Winter Walks and enjoy the outdoors in your area.

Running all around the country between Boxing Day and January 3, the festival will host more than 700 walks that are completely free and open to anyone.

Led by experienced leaders, it's the perfect opportunity to get outside, enjoy the crisp winter air and blow away the winter cobwebs. There'll be plenty of free delicious Nature Valley Snack Bars on offer at lots of the walks too! Visitwww.ramblers.org.uk/winterwalks to find a free festival walk near you.

Plus – WIN a weekend stay at the beautiful Hotel Endsleigh.

In celebration of the festival, Nature Valley also wants to hear about your favourite winter walk. By simply visiting the website www.naturevalley.co.uk and uploading a photo of this area, you could be in with a chance to win a weekend stay at the beautiful Hotel Endsleigh.

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Q) What day will The Festival of Winter Walks, with Nature Valley, begin this year?

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NATURE VALLEY CHEWY TRAIL MIX BARS

Laura's having a ball as Cinderella

REHEARSALS: Laura Evans will play Cinderella at the Orchard

CINDERELLA has been preparing for her moment in the spotlight at the Orchard Theatre in Dartford.

The theatre's pantomime opens this weekend and the cast, led by Lesley Joseph as the Fairy Godmother, had been hard at work rehearsing for the big performance.

Laura Evans, who plays Cinderella, took a break from rehearsals to tell KOS Media about the magic of putting a pantomime together.

"It's going really well and we've been very busy, slotting it all together," she said.

"I got the script about two weeks before [rehearsals began] so I made a conscious effort to learn my lines before I got here. I like being Cinderella and if you like the character, learning lines is a lot easier."

Many of the cast performed the show together at a different location last year and have been enjoying the experience of reconnecting for this year's production.

"It's fabulous – everyone's lovely and we've just slotted back," Evans said. "It's even better this year because we know the show that much better."

One new member of the cast is Wayne Perry, who plays Prince Charming and will be sharing a song with our heroine.

"He's lovely and handsome, with a beautiful singing voice," Evans said. "Our duet will be fabulous, I'm looking forward to that. We've also worked out our waltz for the ballroom scene."

Evans and her co-stars were looking forward to the opening night and welcoming the crowds into their magical world.

"It's natural to get nervous, but after the first scene it is okay and you want to do it all again," she said.

• ***Cinderella runs at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, until January 10. To book tickets call 01322 220000 or visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.***

A sobering Christmas message

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

A CLASSIC Christmas carol has been reworded to warn motorists of the dangers of drink and drug driving.

Set to the tune of The Twelve Days of Christmas, the 30-second TV and radio commercial – which will run all this month – aims to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Kent's roads over the festive period.

The advert forms part of the 'One drink is too much for Christmas' campaign, which was launched this week by Kent Highway Services with Kent Police.

Insp Paul Sellwood said the force would be keeping a particular eye on motorists this month and emphasised its zero-tolerance approach to drink and drug driving.

He added: "I think the biggest issue for me is the emotional trauma it brings to a family when they lose a loved one at Christmas and the presents are still under the tree. The pain and anguish that drink and drug driving can cause is indescribable.

"There's no safe limit in my view because even one drink will impair your ability to drive to a certain extent, and that could be crucial if you're already a bad driver.

"Motorists prosecuted for drink-driving will get a disqualification, criminal record, up to £5,000 fine and a possible prison sentence. But the consequences of a serious crash could be far worse.

"If you know you're going to drink then why drive? It's not worth the pain and anguish of spending Christmas in a hospital bed, or worse still killing yourself."

Between 2004 and 2008, just over 300 people were either killed or injured in drink-drive related crashes in Kent over the festive period, and last December 275 motorists were arrested after failing breath tests.

The new television and radio commercial will also be shown on big screens at sites such as shopping centres, while a choir will belt out the safety message.

Cllr Nick Chard, Kent County Council's cabinet member for highways, said: "Drink-driving wrecks lives, and not just the driver's.

"Let's all have a great Christmas shared with our loved ones. Please remember, even one drink will affect your driving and could mean the difference between a happy Christmas and a sad one."

CHRISTMAS CAROL

"Celebrate this Christmas, raise a glass or two;
Make the party go with a swing;
But remember who's driving when the good times are through;
One drink can lose you everything."

WARNING: This year's festive campaign warning against the perils of drink and drug driving

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A word in your era

Author examines centuries of changes in our dialect

By CHRIS MURPHY
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

IT'S ENOUGH to make you addle-pated if you are a boldrumptious blouse.

Or to put it another way, catching up on old Kentish dialects from years gone can make you giddy in the head if you are a presumptuous country wench.

The strange words were once part of our language in the county, but many of them have been long forgotten – until now.

We all know 'yum' as something tasting nice, but did you know 'yummery' is a festering skin injury.

A new book examines the way language has changed around the UK, and the author includes a section on our county, much of dating back to before the Victorians.

The book is called The Wonder of Whiffling published by Penguin.

Dialects

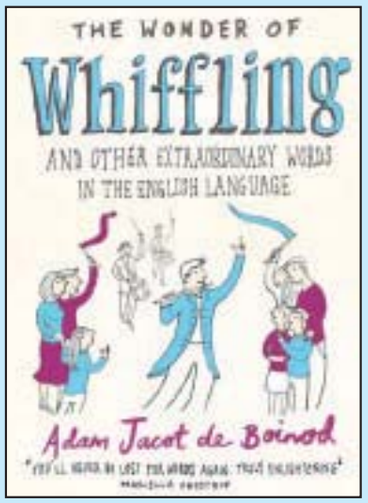
Author Adam Jacot de Boinod said: "This book encompasses all that raises an eyebrow, from Anglo-Saxon to trailer park slang.

"I looked at the origin of English right up to the contemporary, from words formalised in the Oxford English dictionary to slang and jargon, from the dialects within the British Isles to English spoken abroad.

"The idea came to me while I was working on my last two books, scouring libraries and secondhand bookshops.

"I had been riffling through reference books from around the world to find words with unusual and delightful meanings.

"Of course, English has some splendid dictionaries too, many covering dialect, slang and subsidiary areas, such as Jamaican or Newfoundland English.



KENT WORDS FROM DAYS GONE BY

- Addle-pated – giddiness in the head
- Alleycumfee – a non-existent place
- Besom – an unmarried woman of moral laxity or temperamental character; a deliberately naughty child
- Bibber – to shake with nervousness or grief
- Bishop's finger – a guiding signpost with one pointed arm, supposedly named because it points the right way, often to a church
- Boldrumptious – presumptuous
- Checker – full up, alternatively depressed, annoyed
- Dawdy – dainty, neat
- Drunkards – the outside poles of a hop garden that lean
- Ersh – corn stubble
- Face-catcher – a stag beetle that at dusk flies at face height
- Gimmer – a female employer of men and women
- Hobgrob – to eat in a greedy, messy way
- Jawsy – a chatterbox
- Lushington – a drunkard, a person chronically fond of drinking
- Maux – a lazy, slipshod person, often used of a woman or girl, a slattern or prostitute
- Orts and ertsies – scraps left from a meal, odds and ends
- Polrumptious – unruly obstreperous (see boldrumptious)
- Ponto – person who searches dustbins, or begs
- Snying – curving, twisting, bending
- Tatterdemalion – scarecrow, also a ragged man with clothes in tatters
- Whipsticks – to walk whipsticks was to do so very hurriedly
- Yaffle – eat or drink greedily, noisily
- Yummery – festering skin injury

"There is a wealth of little-known or forgotten words in our language through Anglo-Saxon, Old and Middle English and Tudor–Stuart, then on to the rural dialects collected so lovingly by the Victorians.

"Some words mean the same, but others have changed beyond recognition, such as racket, which originally meant the palm of the hand; grape, a hook for gathering fruit; or muddle, to wallow in mud."

Underworld

Some words appear to have multiple meanings, hence the name of the book.

Adam said: "In 18th century Oxford and Cambridge, a whiffler was one who examined candidates for degrees, while elsewhere a whiffler was an officer who cleared the way for a procession, as well as being the name for the man with the whip in morris dancing.

"The word also means to blow or scatter with gusts of air, to move or think erratically, as well as applying to geese descending rapidly from a height once the decision to land has been made.

"In the underworld slang of Victorian times, a whiffler was one who cried out in pain, while in the cosier world of PG Wodehouse, whiffled was what you were when you'd had one too many of Jeeves' special cocktails."

Summing up, he said: "So let's raise a brendice, a cup in which a person's health is drunk, to this extraordinary language of ours, crammed full of words most ostrobogulous, bizarre and interesting, the study of which could keep us occupied from beetle-belch to cockshut.

"As a self-confessed bowerbird, one who collects an astonishing array of sometimes useless objects, I've greatly enjoyed putting together this collection."

WORDSMITH: Adam Jacot de Boinod says there is a wealth of words in our language that have been lost over the centuries

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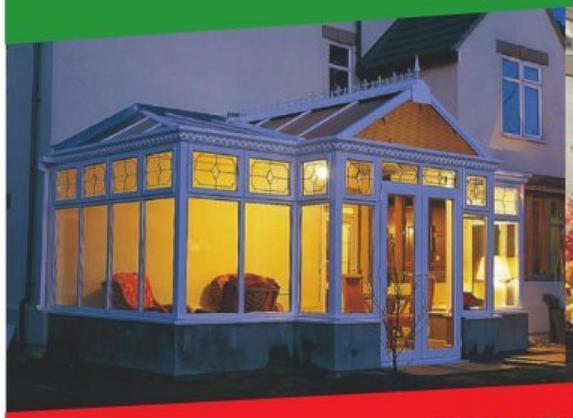

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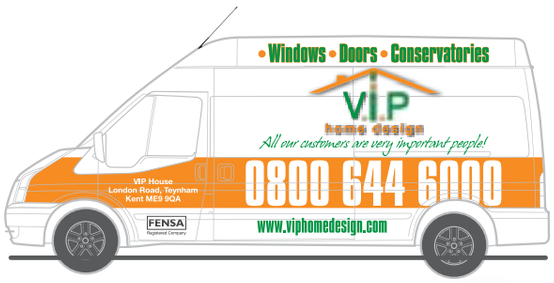

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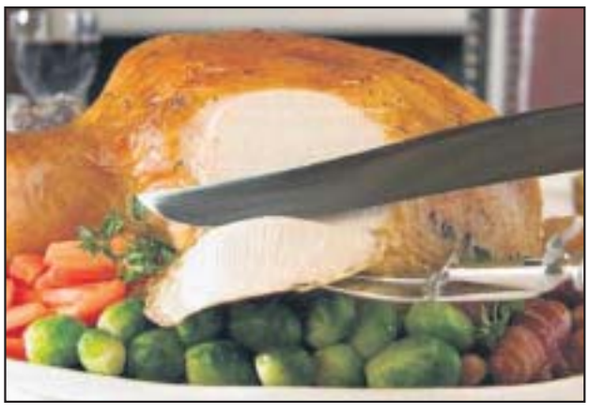

As we enter the countdown to Christmas, RACHEL MCATHY returns to the biggest turkey farmers in the county at Priory Farm to find out how they offer top quality meat every year

TURKEYS and Christmas make the perfect partnership, with people across the country looking forward to tucking into the bird at this festive time of year.

Our county is a turkey hotspot, with farmers such as Andrew Wreathall at Appledore Turkeys, in Ashford, producing some the best quality birds around.

After months spent roaming free, it is time for these turkeys and others throughout Kent to make the journey from field to fork.

But these won't be any old turkeys. Due to their healthy diet and free-range rearing, they promise to be in a class of their own.

"All the birds live a long and healthy life with the freedom to roam grassy paddocks," Mr Wreathall said.

"This contributes to their distinctive taste and texture. The birds are also very slow grown, unlike supermarket birds which are grown very quickly and killed very early.

"Our birds have a much finer texture to their meat and an element of fat which allows self-basting to take place."

And because they are reared within the county, customers can look forward to the freshest meat possible on the special day. "They go straight from us to the butcher, to the customer," Mr Wreathall explained.

"There is no one in between, compared with other farmers who send live birds to the slaughterhouse miles away. We do it all here to save them stress. Our birds have a much happier life and that is reflected in the taste and quality."

This focus on the best care is what separates Appledore Turkeys from the rest and keeps them in business in the face of intensifying competition.

"We have been under a lot of pressure from supermarkets, but they cannot offer the quality we do," Mr Wreathall added.

"Our birds are dry-plucked by hand and then hung for seven to 10 days, which helps improve the flavour.

"Supermarket birds are wet plucked by machines and gutted in the same process, then cleaned up and packed off.

"Most people think of turkeys as a very dry meat but our birds, because of their ages and what they are fed, get a bit of fat on them so they are very succulent and tasty. It is a different experience to what most people have when they eat turkey."

Keeping the future of turkey farming in Kent secure is crucial to Mr Wreathall and he is convinced quality will always prevail.

"We are the biggest turkey farmer in Kent and it is a Kentish bird, so it is important to us that local people support us," he said.

"We produce quality birds and are proud of what we are doing."To stock up on food for your very own festive feast this Christmas, from local producers, visit www.foodforkent.co.uk.

Try this great Appledore Turkeys fricassee recipe

Ingredients

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 oz butter
- 2 oz approx plain flour
- 11/2 lb approx chopped, cooked turkey
- 4 oz mushrooms
- 4 oz streaky bacon, chopped
- Milk
- Chicken stock
- Salt and ground black pepper
- Tarragon
- 2 tablespoons cream

Method

Fry off onion, mushrooms and bacon in a little of the butter and put aside. In clean large pan, melt remaining butter and add flour until paste is formed.

Cook for a minute and begin adding milk a little at a time, stirring until you have a thick white sauce, finish off with a little chicken stock for more flavour.

Add chopped turkey, mushrooms, onions and bacon. Also add tarragon and seasoning according to taste.

Simmer gently over low heat, stirring occasionally for 15 to 20 minutes. Stir in cream. Serve with rice, pasta or new potatoes. Serves four.

Ale and hearty evening at Sheps' Beer Dinner

TOP county beer and food will be celebrated at Shepherd Neame in Faversham with a Beer Dinner next weekend.

The award-winning brewery will host a four-course dinner, made with freshly prepared ingredients grown in the county.

Each course will be matched with a specially selected beer and visitors can also learn how master brewers and their taste panel assess every batch of beer and even take part in a beer quiz.

The event will take place on Saturday, December 12, from 7pm to 11.30pm. Tickets cost £34.95 and can be booked on 01795 542016 and more information can be found at www.shepherdneame.co.uk.

Markets across county

THIS week there are plenty of chances to stock up on top Kent produce at an array of farmers' markets across the county.

On Monday, a market will be running in Bromley from 9am to 5pm; and on Tuesday in Hildenborough from 9am to 11am, Bromley from 9am to 5pm and in Capel-le-Ferne from 10am to 1pm.

In the middle of the week, there will be two markets in Deal from 9am to noon, and Bromley again from 9am to 5pm, on Wednesday. To find out listings for the rest of the week, visit www.kentfarmersmarkets.org.uk

foodforkent.co.uk We are committed to adding more local suppliers to our online service and any local business or producer that wishes to join our campaign should contact us at foodforkent.co.uk or email us at feedback@kosmedia.co.uk

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KENT ON SUNDAY

COMMENT

Is it really worth the heartbreak?

THERE have been many campaigns warning motorists about dangerous driving.

They have even gone so far as to show gruesome pictures of victims in body bags and graphic adverts showing children being run over to shock drivers into taking more care.

Yet none of them hits home the heartbreak as starkly as the tragic tale of the father who lost his teenage son in a car accident and the subsequent suicide of the boy's mother, who couldn't face life without her son.

In this case the driver hadn't been drinking, but as the festive season approaches and parties come thick and fast, police predict more drivers will take the risk after one too many.

The next move to counter the problem is a re-worded Christmas carol warning of the dangers of drink or drug driving.

But people who drink and drive are less worried about killing themselves and others than they are about getting caught.

Perhaps the way forward is to leave them in a room with the family of a child who died in a drink-related crash. Or the driver who was locked up for killing them.

You've been saved

PRODUCERS of Saturday night favourite You've Been Framed must be in despair as parents opt out of filming nativity plays over confusion with Government guidelines.

But at least future generations can breathe a sign of relief that embarrassing childhood moments won't be endlessly replayed at family gatherings.

OPINION: When good ideas go bad

Ebbsfleet Utd fan David Spencer charts the club's downward spiral

EIGHTEEN months ago, everything was looking rosy at Ebbsfleet United.

More than 25,000 fans had just travelled to Wembley to see them lift the FA Trophy; they had achieved worldwide notoriety for their sale to the supporter subscription website My Football Club.

The site bought 75 per cent of the club, cleared their debt, and had ambitious plans, guided by the votes of their members.

Some pundits began describing Ebbsfleet as 'the Chelsea of the Conference'.

At the end of the 2006-07 season, the team changed its name from Gravesend and Northfleet to Ebbsfleet United, to try and take advantage of the new Eurostar terminal just a stone's throw from the team's ground.

A sizable revenue boost was expected, along with the shirt sponsorship deal with Eurostar.

However, this proved not to be the case, and the club was struggling to make ends meet on average gates of just over 1,000.

The My Football Club concept was sold to the fans as the only viable option on the table.

Initially, the takeover seemed to steady the ship, but since that peak at Wembley, it has been downhill all the way.

The following season, 2008-09, the trophy-winning squad was largely retained, and new players bought in to fuel a push for league football. It wasn't to be.

The squad failed to gel, with the club finishing a disappointing 14th. They also came up short in their defence of the FA Trophy, losing in the semi-finals.

This summer, the reality of the flaws in the My Football Club project have hit home hard. At its peak, there were more than 31,000; today this membership has dwindled to about 7,500.

Of course, the credit crunch has forced fans to cut back, but many members were also underwhelmed with the decision to buy a non-league club, having dreamed of owning clubs such as Leeds United, Nottingham Forest, or even Newcastle.

They had also been promised a vote on all aspects of running the club, including team selection. This also wasn't to be, and the novelty quickly wore off. These days, turnout for votes has dwindled to under 100 for some.

Along with attendances remaining static and the collapse of Setanta, this dramatic membership drop has had a devastating impact on the playing budget.

This summer, the club was forced to release all but three members of last year's squad, and manager Liam Daish had the unenviable task of building a squad on what the club's own website calls a miniscule budget.

The difficulty of this has been evident in the results and performances so far this season. The club finds itself second from bottom, seven points from safety, and only kept off the foot by Chester's 25-point deduction.

There have been just two wins in 22 league games; goal difference stands at -26; and they have had a run of eight games without scoring.

Daish has done his best with free transfers, released youth players, and loan signings, but the dearth of quality is clear, and survival in the Blue Square Premier this season will be a real achievement. Even last week's victory at home to Mansfield, their first at Stonebridge Road since April, looks unlikely to be a turning point.

The future, however, looks even more uncertain. My Football Club is unlikely to revive its flagging membership numbers, especially with the team struggling, meaning budgets will drop further, and a return to part-time status seems inevitable.

Manager Daish has been courted by several other clubs in recent seasons, and is likely to go as soon as a club with fewer problems comes in for him.

Plans for a new stadium also seem to have been dealt a fatal blow, with local councils blocking development proposals on the only suitable site. The borough council has bought their current home Stonebridge Road, which it will rent to the club for a peppercorn rent, but this seems to be little more than a stopgap measure.

If the My Football Club project does fail, it should leave the club debt free, as they are now working within their means. But it will also leave them without a decent team, without a viable ground, and without a plan for the future.

It's a far cry from the Chelsea of the Conference.

A matter of perspective

I can't believe Cllr John Getgood is so dogmatic (Letters, last week). He imagines a few local problems with the Tories in Bromley are a good reason to vote for scandal-ridden Labour instead.

Did he miss how Gordon Brown took £5 billion a year out of our pension schemes? Has he forgotten the abolition of the 10p tax rate, hurting the lower paid? Did he note the £300 million in foreign aid in November, then the refusal to pay for vital drugs for Britons suffering from liver and bowel cancer?

Did he forget how when Brown was Chancellor, he cut the defence budget causing the shortages of equipment our troops have suffered? Didn't he see Brown bask in the glory of the credit explosion, then use taxpayers' money to rescue the brokers?

These facts and others proving Labour's incompetence make Tory spats in Bromley pale into insignificance.

Phil Granger, West Malling

Towns' Cinderella service

Once again Peter Nassan of Chatham (Letters, November 22) has rightly highlighted the apathy in the Medway towns, especially Medway Council's involvement (or lack of) for the betterment of the older generation.

His suggestion that the council purchase the Theatre Royal site (or what's left of it) to turn the building into a community centre for residents, including pensioners, is worth pursuing.

But it is obvious the preservation of our historic past is of little consequence; the Aveling and Porter building in Strood being the latest so-called 'unsafe structure' due for demolition. Yet what a wonderful residential home that would make, with all amenities already in place. Talk about two birds with one stone – preserve a historic building and create a residential home with river views.

Start talking to the elderly, councillors. There are 11,000 or more pensioners in Medway and we are getting fed up with our treatment.

I admire Peter's persistence, and long may he keep it up. Little is achieved without this attitude and more taxpayers need to follow suit.

It seems the needs of the elderly are but a Cinderella service. This is where more cuts will be implemented. We already have dearer meals on wheels, the closure of council-run residential homes, and no in-house residential wardens.

Medway Council pays lip service to us, but there's little financial input.

Len Knight, Rainham

Fish for compliments

I must take issue with Derek Jarrett, not so much because he would welcome Sainsbury's to Hythe, but because he says there is no fishmonger. Griggs of Hythe must be the finest fishmonger in Kent.

I would also defend Aldi, which offers good quality at reasonable prices and it is simply not true to say that everything is foreign.

With two Sainsbury's in Folkestone, plus Morrisons, Asda, Lidl and three Tesco stores, I would have thought Folkestone and Hythe have more than enough supermarkets.

Elizabeth Lonkhurst, Folkestone

Reverse Tory strategy

Last week I attended Medway Council's overview and scrutiny meeting where the proposed mergers of schools across the towns was discussed at length. The cross-party committee decided to recommend the cabinet should not proceed with the proposed mergers of Delce Infants and Juniors, and also of All Faith's and St Nicholas in Strood.

The committee accepted the heartfelt yet reasoned arguments of the heads and chairs of governors of the four schools.

I and my Labour colleagues on the committee were pleased with the decisions taken. They reflected our views, and more importantly the results of the consultation and all the points made by the schools themselves.

What a pity this approach wasn't taken with St Peter's, St John's and Ridge Meadow. Why were the arguments from these schools, from the staff, parents and governors, so ignored, especially at the two schools due to be closed? Surely this drives a coach and horses through the council's overall strategy?

The fact that decisions have been overturned, or have created such controversy, or been rejected by scrutiny reflects the fact the strategy is inherently flawed. It also demonstrates again, if it needed to be shown, what happens when this Tory council doesn't consult before taking decisions. It's not too late to stop the closures of St John's and Ridge Meadow, and what happened last week has emphasised what an unwanted, ill-considered and ill-thought-out strategy this was in the first place.

Cllr Bill Esterson, Labour spokesman, Medway Council children's services

Sandy can be so handy

While waiting at traffic lights on Cecil Street in Margate, I noticed a suited gentleman stop and replace a drain cover that had fallen off the pavement, causing a trip hazard.

As he made his way into the council offices, I noted it was none other than Thanet council leader Sandy Ezeikel. He could easily have have called someone out at a cost to the public purse, but was happy to get his hands dirty, even without a photo opportunity.

Perhaps we should all take a little more notice and pride in our environment.

Neil Sint, London

Savings and the city

Why has Canterbury City Council limited the areas of budget saving to a specific non-negotiable agenda of choices?

A consultation should be transparent and give a clear and fair portrait of possibilities. For instance, Canterbury visitor information centre could be moved to the council offices and its retail shop closed or sublet, as they have for Herne Bay. The rent for the Canterbury centre is over £50,000 a year. Close it, or if they really want a shop, seek a more economic solution. There are shops available for as little as £13,000 per annum.

What about pay cuts for higher paid officials, and a rise for low-wage workers who put just as much effort into public service.

No more bonuses, and no Christmas parties at taxpayers' expense. And why not dispense with the Lord Mayor and his entourage – is such pomposity really relevant in a modern society?

Mike Hennelly, Herne Bay

Letters continued on page 32

YOUR LETTERS

KOS Media welcomes your comments and letters for publication. Please send correspondence to: Letters to the Editor, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. Alternatively fax them to: 01303 817002, or email them to editorial@kosmedia.co.uk. Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances. Please also include a daytime telephone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit letters.

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BIRTHS

ADAMS
Finley Charles John born on the 25th November 2009, weighing 7lbs 3ozs. Son to Chris and Dawn Adams of Folkestone. Brother to Brooke.

BARNES
Elizabeth and Jamie Barnes celebrate the birth of their daughter Grace May Armstrong Barnes on 27th October 2009. A much loved sister for Isabelle Barnes.

BARTON
Jurgita and Jason are delighted to announce the birth of Jacob Henry who was born on 24th November 2009. Proud Grandparents are John and Anita Barton.

BEAN
Michelle and Spencer are delighted to announce the birth of their son Callum Spencer Bean. Callum is warmly welcomed by big sister Abbie.

BICK
Charlotte Louise born on 26th November 2009. Weighing 6lbs 7oz, Daughter to proud parents Lionel and Sarah in Larkfield.

COLLINS
Ciara Elizabeth born on 7th November 2009, weighing 6lbs 14oz. Daughter to Sharon and Daren and sister to Niamh.

DALE
Debbie and Pete Dale of Sittingbourne celebrate the birth of their beautiful son, Rhys Brian on 18th November 2009.

EDWARDS
Hayley and John are proud to announce the birth of their son Evan Edwards who was born on 20th November 2009 at the William Harvey Hospital. Evan is also welcomed by his Grandparents David and Ena, Nicky and Keith.

GIBSON
Benjamin Philip born on 15th November 2009, weighing 5lb 10oz.
Son to Phil and Karrina Gibson in Maidstone.

HARDY
Ryan and Jamie are happy to announce the birth of Tyler Jack Hardy. Proud Grandparents are Elvira, David, Coreen and Rob.

HARRISSON
Claire Hall-Dawson and Richard Harrisson celebrate the birth of their son Hayden James Anthony Harrisson on 25th November 2009.

HOGBEN
Paul and Justine Hogben celebrate the birth of their son Miles Joseph Hogben on 19th November 2009. Baby brother to Evie.

HOLLINS
John Andrew Peter born on 16th November 2009, weighing 6lb 9ozs. The beautiful son of Andrew and Nikke Hollins. Welcome to the world baby boy.

INSTANCE
Ava Deven born 15th November 2009 weighing 7lb 7oz. Daughter to Tracy and Stephen of Walmer.

LEA
Darren, Rachel, Nate and Piper welcome the birth of Jack Samuel Lea.

LYONS
Tony and Susan Lyons celebrate the birth of their son Daniel David John Tate Lyons on 19th November 2009 weighing 5lbs 15oz.

McVEY
Philip and Danielle of Herne Bay are delighted to announce the birth of their beautiful son, Orran Alexander, on 14th November 2009. A new brother for Keir.

NELSON
Jamie and Orlagh Nelson of Leigh are proud to announce the birth of their son Cian David Nelson born 8th November 2009 weighing 7lb 15oz.

NEW
Adele and John are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter Grace Lois who is warmly welcomed by big sister Bobbie and proud Grandparents Shaun and Gill, Carol and Bob, Susan, Peter and Sue.

SHAHZAD
Tehzeeb born on 24th November 2009 weighing 6lbs 11ozs. Daughter to Faiza and Shahzad in Margate.

SYSLOVA
Nikol born on 20th November 2009, weighing 7lbs 4ozs (3.38 kg). Daughter to Veronika Syslova and Marek Sysel in Ramsgate.

THOMPSON
Ella Grace Louise born on 10th November 2009, weighing 6lbs 5oz. Daughter to Jenny and Chris and sister to Josh and Joe.

WARD-JONES
Niki and Chris are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter Scarlett Grace Ward-Jones. Scarletts proud Grandparents are Dave and Maureen Ward, Keith and Fran Jones.

WILSON
Julie and Stephen are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter Molly Marie Wilson. Proud Grandparents are Val and Norman, Margaret and Colin.

MARRIAGES

MIMRAN / WILLIAMS
Congratulations to Dan and Becky who are getting married at Canterbury Registry Office on the 14th December 2009. Love Mum, Dad and Gad.

DEATHS

CARD
Eileen Margaret Card nee Kitney passed away peacefully after a long illness on 29th November 2009, aged 72.

FLYNN
Flynn Charles. Passed away Thursday 26 November at Kent and Canterbury Hospital, aged 90. Husband, Father, Grandfather, Greatgrandfather will be sadly missed by his wife Pat and all his loving family. Former teacher, finally at peace. Funeral to take place at the Church of Our Lady Immaculate, Whitstable on Friday 11 December at 10am. Family flowers only, donations, if desired, for British Heart Foundation c/o Woollard and Kent, 128 Tankerton Road, Whitstable.

HAMMOND
Evelyn Isabol Hammond of Maidstone passed away peacefully on the 22nd November 2009, aged 82 years. Enquiries to Birds Funeral Directors Maidstone 01622 692949.

HENRY-JORDAN
Luke James Henry-Jordan passed away peacefully at home on Saturday 21st November 2009. Private funeral but any donations to Demelza House Bobbing, Sittingbourne. He will be forever in our hearts. Love you always.

HUDSON
Beulah Mather Hudson (nee Jeffes) died peacefully on Monday 23rd November at Pine Lodge Retirement Home in Sittingbourne aged 86. She will be greatly missed by her daughter Hilary, son Douglas, grandson Stuart, granddaughters Julia and Charlotte and great granddaughters Elise and Francesca. She was a past President of the Gillingham Spiritualist Church, a long serving member of the Kent Healers Association and a supporter of the Seekers Trust in Addington.

HUTCHENS
Megan Hutchens would like to celebrate the birth of her daughter Lexi Grace Hutchens, born 23rd October 2009.

MELROSE
Daphne Melrose of Folkestone passed away peacefully on the 29th November 2009.

STRICKLAND
Margaretta Rose Strickland of Faversham (formerly of Kington St Michael Wiltshire) passed away peacefully on 26th November 2009. A much loved wife, mother and grandmother and a lovely lady.

TICKNER
Anne Tickner of Whitstable passed away very suddenly on 25th November 2009. A dearly loved mum, sister and nanny who will be deeply missed.

VENNER
Rowland Venner of Folkestone formerly of Ashford Kent, died on the 23rd November 2009, aged 82 years. Funeral at Hawkinge Crematorium at 2pm on the 7th December 2009.

WILSON
Bryan Leonard Wilson of Snodland passed away after a short illness on the 29th November 2009. Much loved husband, dad and brother. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Letters from page 31

We must make the change now

I must clarify something edited out of my letter regarding the lack of any need for further nuclear power (Letters, November 22).

It was in the 1920s that the UK could have been largely self-sufficient in solar panels, thus reducing our dependence on fossil fuels. Such paneling was invented in the USA in 1895 and became commercially viable in 1906.

Elsewhere, there is more bad news for Dungeness and the possibility of a C station – only four out of the 10 sites selected in the UK would be built on anyway. Any new jobs would be unlikely as the expected contract looks set to go to an American firm which would almost certainly bring in its own workforce. Further, the UK nuclear watchdog has, last week, criticised both American and French nuclear stations for their many faults.

Indeed, since July the UK has had to export power to France as so many of their stations are closed. It has been shown that uranium, a fossil fuel, is running out and the price for mining it has fallen, making it uneconomic to mine and transport. Meanwhile, we have the Copenhagen talks on trying to find a stronger and more binding agreement on cutting greenhouse gases, not just CO2 but others such as methane – 20 times worse than the former for aggravating warming.

Scientists are getting ever more concerned about the melting of the permafrost which would release methane into the atmosphere, hence the need to cut all emissions now.

The USA has pledged 17 per cent cuts, and China 40 per cent, but we will need quite a bit more than that, and soon, if we are to avoid going beyond a 2C planet-wide warming by 2050 or so. Brazil has pledged a 45 per cent cut in deforesting as well.

We need to change the way we do things. We have to stop procrastinating, make the changes necessary and switch to the suggested green new deal, instead of business as usual. The free market neo-liberal model which came crashing down is hurting millions worldwide.

As regards so-called collusion between some scientists on climate information, despite apparently hundreds of documents obtained via the email hacking – which was highly suspicious just ahead of Copenhagen – all the deniers can find are a few cherry-picked emails over 10 years or so and have then misinterpreted them.

These are merely a blip against the thousands of scientific reports on the subject. I regard climate deniers as little different from the creationists who think we all got 'zapped' here about 4004BC.

Thankfully, the Government is to make classes on evolution available in primary schools. It must also do so on climate change. Can we change? Yes, we can, as someone across the pond apparently said.

Ray Duff, Folkestone

Keep your cool at Christmas shops

The shops are getting busier and everyone is rushing around preparing for Christmas. The run-up to Christmas can be exciting, but, unfortunately, it can also be a time when shoppers get aggressive towards shopworkers. When items are out of stock or the queues are long, people are often stressed and have a very short fuse.

Nearly a third of shopworkers have been verbally abused in the past month. This is clearly not acceptable. They are under a lot of pressure, often working long hours, and just trying to do their job. My union, Usdaw, is asking you to bear this in mind next time you're out shopping. Keep your cool and give shopworkers the respect they deserve.

John Hannett, general secretary of Usdaw, the shopworkers' union

Heartfelt appeal

Your readers can make a real difference this Christmas by supporting the British Heart Foundation's Heart to Heart Appeal.

Heart disease touches us all. Every year, thousands die prematurely and those who survive can find life difficult and frightening. The BHF provides vital care and support for heart patients and their families through its Heart HelpLine. A friendly voice on the phone can really make a difference if you or someone you love is adjusting to life with a heart condition.

Heart to Heart is running in Yorkshire Building Society branches this month. You can help make a difference by popping in and donating £1.50 for a Christmas tree decoration or £1 for a packet of 'reindeer food' to leave out on Christmas Eve. Thank you, and have a great Christmas.

Lesley Joseph, actress, Orchard Theatre, Dartford

Keep us posted

The Countryside Alliance welcomes the Government's plans for the future of our post office network. Its new consultation outlines a way to put the network at the forefront of financial services.

These plans will be especially welcome in rural communities. However, there is a concern.

Lord Mandelson has praised the Post Office's worth to our "economic and social fabric" yet this consultation only tackles the economic element. Having failed to understand the social impact of branch closures, does the Government now believe a beefed-up financial services package will make it all better? Not only that, but financial services backed by the Bank of Ireland, so any profits will be heading out of the UK?

We have in the past criticised the Government's role in making the network unviable, so it's encouraging it is now looking to make amends. We urge everyone to take part in the post office consultation and let the Government know how much it means to them.

Simon Hart, chief executive, Countryside Alliance

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Kent County Council

Peek under the hood of winning racing Formula

STUDENTS have been given a glimpse of life in the fast lane by a racing expert from Formula Ford 2000.

Steven Connor, owner of local race team Fat Bloke Racing, paid a visit to the North Farm campus of West Kent College to talk to a group of engineering, motor vehicle and motor-sport students. He explained the workings of motor sports, from the driver's suit and helmet to what judges look for on race day. Three of his pit crew – who are all students at the college – took the bodywork and tyres off his racing car to show students the ins and outs of the vehicle.

ALL TORQUE: Close look at the racing car

Colin Humphrey, an engineering lecturer at the college, said: "It's important to give these guys something to aspire to."

For more information about courses, visit www.wkc.ac.uk.

Unleashing talent as mentors point the way forward

PUPILS are being encouraged into further education through a mentoring scheme involving undergraduates from Kent universities, ***writes Marijke Cox***.

More than 400 pupils aged 14 and upwards have already taken part in the Aimhigher Associates programme which aims to push more young people into going to university.

The Government-led scheme links undergraduates with schoolchildren who have similar backgrounds to encourage the youngsters to make the most of their talents.

They meet with pupils 15-20 times a year to share their own experiences and explain how to move on to further education.

Felicity Dunworth, director of Aimhigher Kent and Medway, said the pilot phase, which saw the initiative trialled in 17 areas in the UK, including this county, highlighted how successful the scheme could be.

She said: "It demonstrated how successful sustained relationships between undergraduates and pupils can be, especially when they are from similar backgrounds.

"We're looking forward to building on what we've learnt and developing the scheme even further so more young people can benefit from the insight and experiences of a graduate."

The initiative is being rolled out to 42 areas nationwide following the success of the pilot.

Education minister David Lammy said Aimhigher Associates was invaluable.

"Dedicated mentors working together with local schools, colleges and universities can offer an unprecedented level of support," he said. "University is a life-changing experience for many people and it remains the case that a degree can add more than £100,000 to a person's lifetime earnings.

THUMBS UP: Pupils on mentoring scheme

"University should be open to all, regardless of background, and we must make sure people know from a young age how they prepare and apply for a place."

Aimhigher Kent and Medway has recruited 115 undergraduates for its own associates programme. They will provide advice and guidance to around 600 school and college pupils in the area.

Stuart Goodall, manager of the Kent and Medway scheme, said: "We conducted focus groups with students and interviews with school staff involved in the pilot phase.

"The pupils remarked how much confidence they gained from talking to undergraduates about university life.

"School staff felt the pupils' participation on the scheme would have a positive impact on their attainment and progression to higher education."

Aimhigher is jointly funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Visit www.aimhigherkentandmedway.org for more information.

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Thrilled to be forging links

ELEVEN students from Canterbury College are celebrating after receiving diplomas in chartered management and personnel practice.

They were presented with certificates in first-line management, and management and leadership during a ceremony at the college, in New Dover Road.

Since completing the course, some have gained promotion at work, with others moving on to higher education.

Mark Hill, director of business and associated services at the college, said he was thrilled with the achievements of the students.

WELL DONE: The Canterbury College students with their diplomas

"This course has helped us forge great links with employers," he said. "The college is committed to improving the standard of employer engagement and is excited that this course had helped us with that goal."

For information about courses, visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk.

Graduating up the career ladder

A RANGE of courses in business and management is on offer at Canterbury Christ Church University to help people get on the career ladder.

And a combination of real-life and theoretical study methods are being used to ensure students get a taste of what running a business is really like.

Steven Mayhew, a business graduate, recommended the courses. He said: "I have built up a portfolio of properties for letting in east Kent, including flats, houses, shops and garages. I am responsible for financing, purchasing, converting and developing the management systems. In doing this I have relied to a large extent on many of the skills I learnt at university. I studied many aspects involving organisations and I continually see the relevance of these in my day-to-day activities."

A new Faculty of Business and Management at the university offers support to local firms and students.

For more information about services or courses at the Broadstairs or Canterbury campus, call 01227 782196 or email business.services@canterbury.ac.uk.

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PLUMBING
career profile

The Absolute & Davison plumbing team; Glen Davison (left) Karl Newton (right)

> "Financially my decision to retrain has been a good return on investment"

Karl Newton, from Herne Bay, worked for many years as a HGV driver. His job took him all over the country, working long and often unsociable hours.

At 32, and with a young family, he felt he needed to change career so he could have more time at home. He retrained to be a plumber at The Plumbing Academy, Edenbridge, Kent and "has never looked back," he remarked.

Five years ago he discussed the options of retraining in a trade with a friend, Glen Davison, also from Herne Bay. Following a lot of research both Karl and Glen decided to embark on training at The Plumbing Academy, a private training provider specialising in training career changers to enter the plumbing trade. In less than 12 months Karl and Glen had achieved their NVQ Level 2 and Level 3 in plumbing and were then able to register with Corgi, now known as Gas Safe. This allows them to undertake all gas related work, as well as general wet plumbing jobs.

With the support of his wife, Karl financed this career change by releasing some equity from their home. "The Plumbing Academy was not the cheapest option around but it was definitely the most professionally run and fully equipped training facility we visited. Most importantly, it offered the correct and full range of nationally recognised City & Guilds qualifications," said Karl.

Now five years down the line, Karl and Glen are successfully running their own plumbing business, Absolute & Davison.

"Financially my decision to retrain has been a good return on investment. My overall quality of life is much improved. I thoroughly enjoy my job and I would do it all again," commented Karl.

Absolute & Davison can be contacted on: 07840 734314

The Plumbing Academy

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You may also call 01843 282956 or email: admin@theatreroyalmargate.com
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Teachers wanted

Local Teachers for Local Schools

We have 100's of permanent positions throughout Kent for qualified teachers, teaching assistants and school support staff.

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Quality Mark
department for children, schools and families
timeplan

MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding individuals in the following areas:

Programme Area Leader in Childcare/ Health and Social Care Ref: PAL06

Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum

Programme Area Leader in Engineering Ref: P0219

Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum

ESOL Programme Area Leader Ref: P0153

Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum

We are looking to recruit exceptional candidates for the above roles to provide support to the Head of Faculty on all Staffing, Student, Curriculum and Quality issues. The successful candidates will be able to demonstrate a significant level of competence in Teaching and Learning, and have good negotiating/communication skills. The post holders will hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Lecturer in Engineering/ Civil Engineering Ref: P0678

Salary: £22,653 - £27,476 per annum

We are looking to recruit an outstanding individual to teach and participate in the development of programmes across the Faculty which includes Electronic, Electrical, Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering disciplines. The successful candidate will possess qualities of reliability, have good communication skills and hold an HNC/HND/Foundation degree or higher in one or more of the above Engineering specialism's. Previous industry experience is essential. The ideal candidate will hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Instructor in Catering Ref: P0384

37 hours per week, 40 weeks per year

Salary: £16,749- £19,127 pro rata

We are looking for a passionate candidate to be involved in the Instruction and Assessment of a range of Catering and Hospitality programmes. The successful candidate will have proven knowledge and recent experience within the industry and hold the A1 and V1 award or be willing to work towards it.

Quality Administrator Ref: P0383

26 hours per week, 38 weeks per year

Salary: £15,607 - £17,750 pro rata

We are looking for a confident individual to provide administrative support to the Head of the Quality Department. The successful candidate will have the ability to work independently and to deadlines as well as excellent communication and IT skills.

Customer Service Advisor Ref: P0375

Salary: £15,225 - £17,402 per annum

We are looking for an exceptional individual to provide a comprehensive and efficient front-line service to the College students, staff and visitors. The successful candidate will be responsible for supporting the smooth running of the College reception. The ideal candidate will have excellent communication skills.

KSRC Technician Ref: P0647

15 hours per week

Salary: £18,433 - £22,367 pro rata

We are looking to recruit a science Technician to support the delivery of teaching and training at the Kent Science Resource Centre. The ideal candidate will have good interpersonal skills and a recognised qualification in a related science subject. Proven knowledge of a Biology or Chemistry laboratory environment is essential.

Painter/Decorator Ref: P0335

Salary: £18,433 - £20,974 per annum

Night shifts

We are looking for a hardworking individual to maintain the good decorative order of the College. The successful candidate will hold a recognised qualification in painting and decorating and experience within the industry would be advantageous. The ability to self motivate and self manage is essential due to the working pattern.

Learning Resource Centre Assistant Ref: P0282

21 hours per week, 40 weeks per year

Salary: £13,554 - £16,988 pro rata

We are looking for an enthusiastic candidate to assist the efficient running of the Learning Resource Centre, ensuring the delivery of high quality, customer focused, easily accessible services to all users. The successful candidate will be responsible for Library administrative and organisational duties and have good communication and IT skills.

Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer

Action for Business College · Investors in Diversity · Positive About Disabled People · RBLI · Investors in People

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CITY VIEW PRE-SCHOOL & NURSERIES LTD
City View Pre-school and Nursery, Beauherne Primary School, City View, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8PT

MATERNITY COVER ASSISTANTS

required for extended hours, term time only Pre-school in Canterbury. To commence employment from January 2010. Possible long term contract available.

Pre-school experience essential.
Enhanced CRB check will be sought for successful candidate.

Application packs will be sent to those leaving a name/address clearly on 01227 784694 or please email mrsdawn.williams@virgin.net.

Closing date - 8th December 2009

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THE THOMAS AVELING SCHOOL

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

(A Foundation Technology College)
Arethusa Rd, Rochester, Kent ME1 2UW
Headteacher: Mr P Jackson, BSc
Tel: 01634 844809 Fax: 01634 818385
Email: office@thomasaveling.co.uk Website: www.thomasaveling.co.uk

Cover Supervisor

Term Time – 31.25 hours per week (Term time plus 5 development days)

Commencing January 2010

Salary: NJC Scale D2 point 12 – Point 21 (presently £15,039 - £19,126 fte)

A rewarding opportunity has arisen for a pro-active organised and self-motivated person to join a successful and over-subscribed secondary school to provide teaching cover supervision across the school and cover for absent colleagues as required to a maximum of 25 lessons per week. In addition, the successful applicant will be required to support student behaviour management systems and may occasionally be required to undertake other reasonable tasks commensurate with the role as may become necessary from time to time.

Closing date for applications: Monday 14th December 2009

Please send your letter of application, together with completed Application Form (available on the school website) and CV to: Mr.S.Rayner, Finance and Business Manager, to the above address.

The Thomas Aveling School is: - an Equal opportunities Employer. - committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students and an enhanced CRB check will be required for all successful applicants.

THE SPENCER WING

East Kent Medical Services Ltd - a private facility at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, are looking to recruit the following :

Staff Nurses Full/Part time Days/Nights

We also have vacancies within our Flexi Bank

To discuss these opportunities please contact
Sister Debbie Burr or Sister Jean Cosgrove on 01233 616202

For job description and application form please contact:
Mandy Oliver
East Kent Medical Services Ltd
The Spencer Wing, QEQM Hospital, Ramsgate Road, Margate, Kent CT9 4BG
Telephone: 01843 234556 Fax: 01843 296333
E-mail: mandy.oliver@thespencerwing.com

The Spencer Wing is an equal opportunity employer
These positions are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure check

East Kent Medical Services Ltd
The Spencer Wing, William Harvey Hospital, Kennington Road,
Willesborough, Ashford, Kent TN24 OLZ
Telephone: 01233 616201 Fax: 01233 616252
e-mail:enquiries@thespencerwing.com
Company Registration 03130118

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School
Adelaide Road, Eythorne, Dover CT15 4AN
Telephone 01304 830376
Email: office@eythorne-elvington.kent.sch.uk

Required for February 2010

Child and Family Liaison Officer

Salary range: £16,793 - £18,471 pro rata
25 hours per week term time only

We are looking for someone with:
- A good basic education
- Previous experience of working with children and families
- Good organisational skills and basic computer skills
- Flexibility - able to work before and after school when necessary

We can offer:
- Friendly, caring and supportive staff
- Energetic and exuberant children

We warmly welcome and encourage visits which can be arranged with the school by calling Mrs Thornton 01304 830376

Application forms and job descriptions are also available by telephoning the school

Closing date: Friday 18 December 2009
Interview date: Thursday 14 January 2010

To advertise in this section ✆ 01303 817040

JobsforKent.co.uk

A selection of the 100s of Local Jobs online

Accountancy

Purchase Ledger Clerk

Ramsgate
Salary: TBA
Purchase Ledger Clerk Required Experienced in all aspects of purchase ledger including invoice processing, reconciling statements, weekly payments, with experience on computerised accounting system. Salary negotiable depending on experience. Monday to Friday 9.00am until 5.30pm. Please send CV's to Alistair Mackay-Miller, Piper Double Glazing Limited, 140 Newington Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 6PP or by e-mail to ron@piperwindows.co.uk. We are an Equal Opportunities Employer.
To apply/more information:
Piper Windows
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email ron@piperwindows.co.uk

Administration, Secretarial, PA

Administrator and PA to Doctor

Canterbury
Salary: TBC
Closing Date: 24/12/09
To apply/more information:
Practice Manager
Wellness Practice
Quoting Job Ref: ISC1
Tel: 01227 789977
Email admin@ideals pinecentre.co.uk

Receptionist / Customer Service

Canterbury
Salary: negotiable
Closing Date: 24/12/09
FULL-TIME OR JOBSHARE can you Provide excellent service "Walt Disney style"? Are you • Hard working and motivated • Enthusiastic and committed • Organised and efficient • Work well solo • Work well within a team • Thrive on self improvement and success? Then we have the job for you!! We require minimum qualifications of 5 GCSE's Grade C and above (must include English and Mathematics). Basic computer skills are preferable. No experience necessary as full training will be given. Apply for this position if you consider yourself to be confident and outgoing. If you think you have what we are looking for, please apply in writing with your CV to: Practice Manager, The Wellness Practice Ltd, Blean, Nr Canterbury, Kent CT2 9EB.
To apply/more information:
Practice Manager
Wellness Practice
Quoting Job Ref: cust 001
Tel: 01227 789977
Email admin@ideals pinecentre.co.uk

Receptionist

Tonbridge
Salary: TBA
Saturday 8 - 5pm Competitive Salary & benefits We are currently looking for an enthusiastic and confident individual to work on our reception desk. As the first point of contact you will need to have an excellent telephone manner, be of smart appearance and enjoy meeting and greeting customers and making them feel welcome. Previous experience in a similar role would be advantage but it is not essential as training will be provided. To apply for this position, please send your CV to Sharon Mallin, Prosche Centre Tonbridge, Brock Farm, Five Oak Green Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 0QN or email sharon.mallin@ porschetonbridge.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Porsche Centre Tonbridge
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email sharon.mallin@ porschetonbridge.co.uk

OFFICE MANAGER

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
Independent Teachers of TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION (Simple, effortless Yoga for the mind) REQUIRE OFFICE MANAGER Job Share, 16 hours weekly rising to 24. One morning a week plus afternoons. Also covering mornings for holidays and other absence. Flexible and enthusiastic individual able to work with our current Office Manager to support our small but growing team of professional teachers covering Britain and Ireland. Requires efficiency and skill to develop the office management; sympathetic telephone manner with enquirers and energetic promotional skills with partners such as doctors, therapists, yoga teachers, business and the media. A varied and challenging position, but low-stress as there are, at present, no staff to manage! REQUIRES experience of Microsoft Office and Outlook, plus lively practical knowledge of use of the most up to date computer applications. APPLICATIONS WITH C.V. TO: Colin & Sue Beckley, Directors, The Meditation Trust, 51 Station Road, Birchington, CT7 9DJ FOR INFO PACK RE TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION CALL 01843 841010
To apply/more information:
Meditation Trust
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 841010
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Part time Admin/Accounts Clerk

Folkestone
Salary: £16,000 pro rata
Part-time Admin/Accounts Clerk 1 position located in Folkestone Salary £16,000 pro rata (2 days per week) Job Summary To provide effective administrative and accounts support. Candidates must have the ability to work within a team and on own initiative with minimal support. Excellent keyboard skills and computer literacy is essential in addition to good organisation and time management skills with an accurate and systematic approach. Closing date for applications is Friday, 11 December 2009. For a job description, please contact info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or telephone 01303 297050. Kent & Medway Networks Ltd is an equal opportunities employer.
To apply/more information:
Kent and Medway Networks Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 297050
Email info@kmn-ltd.co.uk

Quality Administrator

Medway
Salary: £15,607 - £17,750 pro rata
Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009
Quality Administrator Ref: P0383 26 hours per week, 38 weeks per year Salary: £15,607 - £17,750 pro rata We are looking for a confident individual to provide administrative support to the Head of the Quality Department. The successful candidate will have the ability to work independently and to deadlines as well as excellent communication and IT skills. Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0383
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk

Art and Design

Curator

Margate
Salary: circa £25k
TURNER CONTEMPORARY Margate opens 2011 Communications and Relationship Manager circa £34k Curator circa £25k Curator of Public Programmes circa £25k Development Manager circa £36k Finance Manager circa £34k Learning Officer circa £25k Turner Contemporary is seeking ambitious, creative and highly motivated individuals to join the team in all areas of our work. Designed by David Chipperfield Architects, the Gallery will open in spring 2011. You will be joining us at a key stage in Turner Contemporary's development and will play a major role in developing and realising the gallery's programmes, profile and operating systems as we prepare to welcome our visitors. To find out more about Turner Contemporary and to apply for any of the above roles, go to: www.turnercontemporary.org Closing date for applications: Wed 16 December 2009 Interviews will take place week commencing 4 & 11 January 2010
To apply/more information:
Turner Contemporary
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Curator of Public Programmes

Margate
Salary: circa £25k
Closing Date: Wed 16 December TURNER CONTEMPORARY Margate opens 2011 Communications and Relationship Manager circa £34k Curator circa £25k Curator of Public Programmes circa £25k Development Manager circa £36k Finance Manager circa £34k Learning Officer circa £25k Turner Contemporary is seeking ambitious, creative and highly motivated individuals to join the team in all areas of our work. Designed by David Chipperfield Architects, the Gallery will open in spring 2011. You will be joining us at a key stage in Turner Contemporary's development and will play a major role in developing and realising the gallery's programmes, profile and operating systems as we prepare to welcome our visitors. To find out more about Turner Contemporary and to apply for any of the above roles, go to: www.turner contemporary.org Closing date for applications: Wed 16 December 2009 Interviews will take place week commencing 4 & 11 January 2010
To apply/more information:
Turner Contemporary
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Learning Officer

Margate
Salary: circa £25k
Closing Date: Wed 16 December TURNER CONTEMPORARY Margate opens 2011 Communications and Relationship Manager circa £34k Curator circa £25k Curator of Public Programmes circa £25k Development Manager circa £36k Finance Manager circa £34k Learning Officer circa £25k Turner Contemporary is seeking ambitious, creative and highly motivated individuals to join the team in all areas of our work. Designed by David Chipperfield Architects, the Gallery will open in spring 2011. You will be joining us at a key stage in Turner Contemporary's development and will play a major role in developing and realising the gallery's programmes, profile and operating systems as we prepare to welcome our visitors. To find out more about Turner Contemporary and to apply for any of the above roles, go to: www.turnercontemporary.org Closing date for applications: Wed 16 December 2009 Interviews will take place week commencing 4 & 11 January 2010
To apply/more information:
Turner Contemporary
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Catering, Hospitality

WAIT STAFF and BAR / COCKTAIL STAFF

Ramsgate
Salary: TBA
WAIT STAFF & BAR / COCKTAIL STAFF wanted for fine dining restaurant in Ramsgate. Experience essential. Must be able to work weekends and evenings. Please send CV to info@ageandsons.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Age & Sons
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email info@ageandsons.co.uk

Child Care

Child and Family Liaison Officer

Dover
Salary: £16,793 - £18,471 pro rata
Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School Adelaide Road, Eythorne, Dover CT15 4AN Telephone 01304 830376 Email: office@eythorne-elvington.kent.sch.uk Required for February 2010 Child and Family Liaison Officer Salary range: £16,793 - £18,471 pro rata 25 hours per week term time only We are looking for someone with: • A good basic education • Previous experience of working with children and families • Good organisational skills and basic computer skills • Flexibility - able to work before and after school when necessary
To apply/more information:
Eythorne Elvington
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01304 830376
Email office@eythorne-elvington.kent.sch.uk

Customer Service, Call Centre

Customer Service Advisor

Medway
Salary: £15,225 - £17,402 per annum
Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009
Customer Service Advisor Ref: P0375 Salary: £15,225 - £17,402 per annum We are looking for an exceptional individual to provide a comprehensive and efficient front-line service to the College students, staff and visitors. The successful candidate will be responsible for supporting the smooth running of the College reception. The ideal candidate will have excellent communication skills. Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0375
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk

Domestic

Office Cleaners

Tonbridge
Salary: £62.50pw
Office Cleaners, Need a Car for Tonbridge Area, 06:00 – 08:00, Mon-Fri, £62.50pw. Phone 01622 882492.
To apply/more information:
Minster Cleaning Services
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 882492
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Office Cleaner

Maidstone
Salary: £10phr
Office Cleaner, every Friday, 09.30-11:00am, £10phr. Please phone 07946 707953
To apply/more information:
Minster Cleaning Services
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 07946 707953
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Office Cleaner, Canterbury

Canterbury
Salary: £90 pw
Office Cleaner, Canterbury, Mon-Fri, 06:00-09:00, £90pw. To start in January. Tel 01622 882492
To apply/more information:
Minster Cleaning Services
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 882492
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Domestic Trades

Painter/Decorator

Medway
Salary: £18,433 - £20,974 per annum
Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009
Painter/Decorator Ref: P0335 Night shifts We are looking for a hardworking individual to maintain the good decorative order of the College. The successful candidate will hold a recognised qualification in painting and decorating and experience within the industry would be advantageous. The ability to self motivate and self manage is essential due to the working pattern. Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0335
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk

Education, Teacher, School

Community Liaison Officer

Medway
Salary: £19,621- £26,276
Closing Date: 15th December 2009
To apply/more information:
Miers Court Primary School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 388943
Email patts004@medway.org.uk

GRADUATE TEACHER PROGRAMME

Gravesend
Salary: £15,461
To apply/more information:
Northfleet Technology College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01474 533802
Email taylorg@ntc.kent.sch.uk

Part-time Teacher of Humanities (Maternity Cover)

Aylesford
Salary: Main Scale
Closing Date: 14th December 2009
Aylesford School – Sports College is an innovative forward looking Specialist Sports College. We have a strong community ethos where we put the learner at the heart of everything we do. At Aylesford School – Sports College we can offer you:-* A new school. * Outstanding new facilities in all areas. *NQT/ New staff induction package that is second to none. * A highly regarded CPD programme with personal professional pathways. *Your own laptop for the duration of your appointment. * A buzzing and vibrant staff who are friendly and keen to help one another. *A forward looking curriculum with individualised pathways for students. We are looking for a committed professional who: *Can motivate students through the curriculum. * Has the desire to make the
To apply/more information:
Jill McKenna
Aylesford School - Sports College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 717341
Email jill.mckenna@ aylesford.kent.sch.uk

Part-time Lecturers in Numeracy and Functional Skills

Tonbridge
Salary: £11,880 - £16,333 pa
Closing Date: 12noon on 10th December 2009
To apply/more information:
West Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: KOS14
Tel: 01732 376511
Email hr-dept@wkc.ac.uk

Cover Supervisor

Rochester
Salary: £15,039 - £19,126 fte
Closing Date: Monday 14th December 2009
To apply/more information:
Thomas Aveling School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 844809
Email office@thomasaveling.co.uk

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Programme Area Leader in Childcare/ Health and Social Care

Medway
Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum
Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009
Programme Area Leader in Childcare/ Health and Social Care Ref: PAL06 Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: PAL 06
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Programme Area Leader in Engineering

Medway
Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum
Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009
Programme Area Leader in Engineering Ref: P0219 Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications @midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0219
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk

ESOL Programme Area Leader

Medway
Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum
Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009
ESOL Programme Area Leader Ref: P0153 Salary: £30,204 - £32,865 per annum We are looking to recruit exceptional candidates for the above roles to provide support to the Head of Faculty on all Staffing, Student, Curriculum and Quality issues. The successful candidates will be able to demonstrate a significant level of competence in Teaching and Learning, and have good negotiating/communication skills. The post holders will hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification. Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0678
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk

Instructor in Catering

Medway
Salary: £16,749- £19,127 pro rata
Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009
Instructor in Catering Ref: P0384 37 hours per week, 40 weeks per year Salary: £16,749- £19,127 pro rata We are looking for a passionate candidate to be involved in the Instruction and Assessment of a range of Catering and Hospitality programmes. The successful candidate will have proven knowledge and recent experience within the industry and hold the A1 and V1 award or be willing to work towards it. Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications @midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0384
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications @midkent.ac.uk

KSRC Technician

Medway
Salary: £18,433 - £22,367 pro rata
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0647
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications @midkent.ac.uk

Learning Resource Centre Assistant

Medway
Salary: £13,554 - £16,988 pro rata
Closing Date: Wed 16 December
Learning Resource Centre Assistant Ref: P0282 21 hours per week, 40 weeks per year Salary: £13,554 - £16,988 pro rata We are looking for an enthusiastic candidate to assist the efficient running of the Learning Resource Centre, ensuring the delivery of high quality, customer focused, easily accessible services to all users. The successful candidate will be responsible for Library administrative and organisational duties and have good communication and IT skills Closing Date: Wednesday 16 December 2009 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0282
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications@ midkent.ac.uk

Industrial, Warehouse, Factory

Order Pickers/ warehouse staff

Kent
Salary: £5.80-£7/hr
Order Pickers/warehouse staff, various locations and shifts for IMMEDIATE START!! Must have own transport!!! £5.80-£7/hr. Please call Jenny at Berry Recruitment on 01622 609570 (agy)
To apply/more information:
Berry Recruitment
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 609570
Email jenny.franklin@ berryrecruitment.co.uk

Information Tech, Internet, Telecoms

Technical and Production Manager

Margate
Salary: £25,000 - £27,000 p.a.
Closing Date: Wednesday 23rd December 2009 at 12pm
Technical & Production Manager – Theatre Royal Margate Theatre Royal Margate is seeking an organised and motivated candidate with excellent technical and production skills and a desire to work in a dynamic arts organisation based in a Grade II* Victorian theatre . You will manage a small team of casual technical staff as part of the 2-year Made in Margate project, servicing the incoming programme, in-house productions and outreach activities of Theatre Royal Margate. This is a full-time position, for a fixed term of two years, working with and supported by the General Manager and Artistic Director in a small and busy organisation. Salary £25,000 - £27,000 p.a. Closing Date for applications: Wednesday 23rd December 2009 at 12pm. Interviews: w/c 4th January 2010 For an Application pack please visit our website: www.theatreroyalmargate.com You may also call 01843 282956 or email: admin@theatre royalmargate.com Application forms can be downloaded from our website: www.theatre royalmargate.com
To apply/more information:
Theatre Royal Margate
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 282956
Email admin@theatre royalmargate.com

Insurance, Banking, Finance

Finance Manager

Margate
Salary: circa £34k
TURNER CONTEMPORARY Margate opens 2011 Communications and Relationship Manager circa £34k Curator circa £25k Curator of Public Programmes circa £25k Development Manager circa £36k Finance Manager circa £34k Learning Officer circa £25k Turner Contemporary is seeking ambitious, creative and highly motivated individuals to join the team in all areas of our work. Designed by David Chipperfield Architects, the Gallery will open in spring 2011. You will be joining us at a key stage in Turner Contemporary's development and will play a major role in developing and realising the gallery's programmes, profile and operating systems as we prepare to welcome our visitors. To find out more about Turner Contemporary and to apply for any of the above roles, go to: www.turner contemporary.org Closing date for applications: Wed 16 December 2009 Interviews will take place week commencing 4 & 11 January 2010
To apply/more information:
Turner Contemporary
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Leisure, Tourism, Travel

Weight Loss Challenge Leaders

Maidstone
Salary: £1000-3000 per month
A REWARDING NEW CAREER IN HEALTH AND WELLNESS Arriba Weight Loss Challenge Leaders required Full Time/Part Time £1000-3000 per month Full training and support available Call Estelle on 01622 664861 www.arribakent.biz
To apply/more information:
Arriba
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 664861
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Marketing, Advertising

Communications and Relationship Manager

Margate
Salary: circa £24k
Closing Date: Wed 16 December 2009
TURNER CONTEMPORARY Margate opens 2011 Communications and Relationship Manager circa £34k Curator circa £25k Curator of Public Programmes circa £25k Development Manager circa £36k Finance Manager circa £34k Learning Officer circa £25k Turner Contemporary is seeking ambitious, creative and highly motivated individuals to join the team in all areas of our work. Designed by David Chipperfield Architects, the Gallery will open in spring 2011. You will be joining us at a key stage in Turner Contemporary's development and will play a major role in developing and realising the gallery's programmes, profile and operating systems as we prepare to welcome our visitors. To find out more about Turner Contemporary and to apply for any of the above roles, go to: www.turner contemporary.org Closing date for applications: Wed 16 December 2009 Interviews will take place week commencing 4 & 11 January 2010
To apply/more information:
Turner Contemporary
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Development Manager

Margate
Salary: circa £36k
Closing Date: Wed 16 December
TURNER CONTEMPORARY Margate opens 2011 Communications and Relationship Manager circa £34k Curator circa £25k Curator of Public Programmes circa £25k Development Manager circa £36k Finance Manager circa £34k Learning Officer circa £25k Turner Contemporary is seeking ambitious, creative and highly motivated individuals to join the team in all areas of our work. Designed by David Chipperfield Architects, the Gallery will open in spring 2011. You will be joining us at a key stage in Turner Contemporary's development and will play a major role in developing and realising the gallery's programmes, profile and operating systems as we prepare to welcome our visitors. To find out more about Turner Contemporary and to apply for any of the above roles, go to: www.turnercontemporary.org Closing date for applications: Wed 16 December 2009 Interviews will take place week commencing 4 & 11 January 2010
To apply/more information:
Turner Contemporary
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Nursing, Medicine, Care Work

Saturday Night Carer

Romney Marsh
Salary: TBA
BETHANY LODGE CARE HOME Eastbridge Road, Dymchurch Requires A Saturday Night Carer, 8pm – 8am To join our team of professionals caring for young people with disabilities Rewarding and friendly environment, Enhanced rates for NVQ Tel: 01303 872289 for more information And application form All applicants will be required to complete a criminal records bureau check.
To apply/more information:
Bethany Lodge/Bethany House
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 872289
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Assistant Manager

Folkestone
Salary: TBA
Assistant Manager Required For Residential Care Home In Folkestone We are looking to recruit an enthusiastic and committed person. Must have Minimum NVQ Level 3 Qualification, and Experience in the role above. Please call Miss Julia Carter (Home Manager) on 01303 254019 Subject to satisfactory CRB Check
To apply/more information:
Cumbria House Residential Home
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 254019
Email cumbriahouse@ ashwoodhealthcare.co.uk

Waking Night Carer

Cranbrook
Salary: TBA
We are a care home for adults with a learning disability and require Waking Night Carer To cover waking night shifts from 10pm-8am Mon, Fri and Sat nights. Full training will be given. Own transport essential due to location. Any job offer is subject to full CRB check Please contact The Grange on 01580 240118 to arrange an informal interview
To apply/more information:
Grange (The)
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01580 240118
Email cg-@hotmail.co.uk

1 Night Care Assistant

Dartford
Salary: TBA
Care Home in Darenth, Nr Dartford Require 1 Night Care Assistant To work various night duties, mainly weekend 1 Part Time Care Assistant To work 7am-2pm, mainy weekend Experience is an advantage but not necessary as full training will be provided Due to location you will nedd your own transport Please contact Margaret or Debbie on 01322 224423
To apply/more information:
Darenth Grange Residential Home
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01322 224423
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

1 Part Time Care Assistant

Dartford
Salary: TBA
Care Home in Darenth, Nr Dartford Require 1 Night Care Assistant To work various night duties, mainly weekend 1 Part Time Care Assistant To work 7am-2pm, mainy weekend Experience is an advantage but not necessary as full training will be provided Due to location you will nedd your own transport Please contact Margaret or Debbie on 01322 224423
To apply/more information:
Darenth Grange Residential Home
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01322 224423
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

CARE Staff

Tonbridge
Salary: From £7ph
CARE Staff Weekend Days and Nights available for experienced, reliable and caring people From £7ph – East Peckham For an interview please call Kevin on 01622 871081
To apply/more information:
Kevin Hale Place
Care Homes Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 871081
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

PRACTICE NURSE

Romney Marsh
Salary: TBA
PRACTICE NURSE Required 16 hours per week in a busy surgery in New Romney, Kent. Chronic Disease Management desirable but not essential. Salary according to experience. Please contact: Practice Manager or Nurse Manager on 0844 8151174/5 or email: aallaway@nhs.net
To apply/more information:
Church Lane Surgery
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0844 8151174/5
Email aallaway@nhs.net

Care Manager

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
To apply/more information:
Bluebird Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 570638
Email canterbury@ bluebirdcare.co.uk

Part-time Domiciliary Care Workers

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
Bluebird Care (Canterbury & Thanet) have immediate vacancies in this area for people who are committed to excellence… Care Manager The successful candidate will hold a relevant qualification and have experience of managing a care service. Part-time Domiciliary Care Workers Must be reliable and hardworking. Live in Care Workers Substantial experience of care work is required for these positions. You must be able to work on own initiative will ideally hold a care qualification or be prepared to work towards one. Excellent rates of pay and mileage for all positions. Please telephone 01843 570638 or 01227 206473; or email canterbury@ bluebirdcare.co.uk for an application pack stating which post you wish to apply for.
To apply/more information:
Bluebird Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 570638
Email canterbury@ bluebirdcare.co.uk

Live in Care Workers

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
To apply/more information:
Bluebird Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 570638
Email canterbury@ bluebirdcare.co.uk

SUPPORT WORKERS

Sittingbourne
Salary: £13,250
ACH is a fast-growing organisation, developing new, highquality residential homes for adults with Learning Disabilities. Due to our continued growth we now require the following staff to complement our team at our home in Bobbing. SUPPORT WORKERS Salary £13,250 For an application pack please visit our website at www.achuk.com Alternatively e-mail louise.burrows@achuk.com or contact Human Resources on 0208 502 8841.
To apply/more information:
ACH Care Homes Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0208 502 8841
Email louise.burrows@achuk.com

SUPPORT WORKERS

Medway
Salary: £13,250
ACH is a fast-growing organisation, developing new, highquality residential homes for adults with Learning Disabilities. Due to our continued growth we now require the following staff to complement our team at our homes in STROOD & GILLINGHAM SUPPORT WORKERS (Strood) Salary £13,250 NIGHT SUPPORT WORKERS (Gillingham) Salary £13,250 35 hours per week For an application pack please visit our website at www.achuk.com Alternatively e-mail laura.bell@achuk.com or contact Human Resources on 0208 502 8841
To apply/more information:
ACH Care Homes Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0208 502 8841
Email laura.bell@achuk.com

NIGHT SUPPORT WORKERS

Medway
Salary: £13,250
ACH is a fast-growing organisation, developing new, highquality residential homes for adults with Learning Disabilities. Due to our continued growth we now require the following staff to complement our team at our homes in STROOD & GILLINGHAM SUPPORT WORKERS (Strood) Salary £13,250 NIGHT SUPPORT WORKERS (Gillingham) Salary £13,250 35 hours per week For an application pack please visit our website at www.achuk.com Alternatively e-mail laura.bell@achuk.com or contact Human Resources on 0208 502 8841
To apply/more information:
ACH Care Homes Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0208 502 8841
Email laura.bell@achuk.com

Staff Nurses

Ashford
Salary: TBA
East Kent Medical Services Ltd - a private facility at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, are looking to recruit the following : Staff Nurses Full/Part time Days/Nights We also have vacancies within our Flexi Bank To discuss these opportunities please contact Sister Debbie Burr or Sister Jean Cosgrove on 01233 616202 For job description and application form please contact: Mandy Oliver East Kent Medical Services Ltd The Spencer Wing QEQM Hospital Ramsgate Road Margate Kent CT9 4BG Telephone: 01843 234556 Fax: 01843 296333 E-mail: mandy.oliver@thespencerwing.com The Spencer Wing is an equal opportunity employer These positions are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure check
To apply/more information:
Spencer Wing (The)
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 234556
Email mandy.oliver@ thespencerwing.com

RESOURCE CENTRE TEAM LEADER

Sevenoaks
Salary: £17,745pa
CHIPSTEAD LAKE - RESOURCE CENTRE RESOURCE CENTRE TEAM LEADER To cover maternity leave- February to October 2010 £17,745 per annum + £487 NVQ allowance This is an exciting opportunity to lead a growing and successful resource centre for disabled people. You will have a minimum of 1 year's experience working with physically disabled people and a NVQ level 2/3. You will be leading a small team and co-ordinate the provision of activities so you must be an excellent communicator and organiser. This would be a great opportunity for someone who wishes to gain management experience. Contact us during office hours on 01732 459510 (Sevenoaks) - 24 hr recruitment line 01732 464336. Transport is an advantage due to location.
To apply/more information:
LCDisability
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 459510
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Cook

Folkestone
Salary: TBA
COOK Required for residential Care Home in Folkestone. Must have experience in Cooking for the elderly. Post is subject to CRB check. For more information please Call Julia Carter (Home Manager – telephone 01303 254019
To apply/more information:
Cumbria House Residential Home
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 254019
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

Cognitive Behavioural Therapist

Thanet
Salary: £29,789 – £39,273
Closing Date: 18 December 2009.
Cognitive Behavioural Therapist - Step 3 High Intensity £29,789 – £39,273 AGENDA FOR CHANGE BAND 7 ESSENTIAL CAR USER ALLOWANCE OF UP TO £1,170 PER ANNUM BASED IN THANET • 37 HOURS PER WEEK KCA provides a wide range of high quality, innovative primary care mental health services. You will join our Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service within KCA's Psychological Therapy Providers (PTP) team. You will provide high intensity CBT interventions for a range of common mental health problems. You will also provide an advisory service to IAPT colleagues on matters related to practice and delivery of CBT to individuals accessing the service in line with IAPT guidelines and best practice. The role may include group work, if the post holder is qualified and competent. We provide a strong departmental framework with regular clinical supervision, line management, monthly team meetings and effective administration. A Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is essential, and you must be accredited or working towards accreditation with the BABCP. To discuss this role informally please contact the Service Manager, Lynda Burr on 01843 593832 (Monday, Wednesday or Friday). An application form and job description can be downloaded from www.kca.org.uk or call 01795 590635. Please quote ref: 622.
Closing Date: 18 December 2009.
Interview date: TBA. Interviews will take place in Ramsgate. KCA (UK) is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity for all. Charity no: 292824.
To apply/more information:
KCA (UK)
Quoting Job Ref: 622
Tel: 01795 590635
Email applications@ jobsforkent.co.uk

2 x Experienced Night Senior Healthcare Assistants

Sittingbourne
Salary: £6.50p/hr
Charing Healthcare are looking to recruit, for a Care Home in Sittingbourne 2 Experienced Night Senior Healthcare Assistants for an EMI Residential Home NVQ 2 minimum 2 nights per week, 22hrs, 8pm-7am, £6.50p/hr For more details and an informal discussion please call Angie or Sarah on 01795 423695
To apply/more information:
Charing Healthcare
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01795 423695
Email angie@charinghealt hcare.co.uk

Retail, Wholesale, Sales

Sales People

Kent
Salary: TBA
Black Tie Foods Ltd Sales People required No experience necessary. Full training and vehicle provided. Call 01732 760484
To apply/more information:
Black Tie Foods Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 760484
Email blacktie@btconnect.com

Account Handler/Administrator

Dover
Salary: £18,000 - £20,000 pa
Closing Date: 18 December 2009
Account Handler/Administrator Dover £18,000 - £20,000 pa, Full-time, Permanent Acorn Marketing Ltd is a small, dynamic sourcing agency that imports custom-printed promotional products to sell 'Business to Business' to UK clients. We're hiring a highly motivated all-rounder for this critically important role.
To apply/more information:
Acorn Marketing
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email jennifer@acorn.uk.net

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Tunbridge Wells Borough Council - Notice of Public Consultation

Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)
Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004
Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2008

Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Development Framework
Cranbrook Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has prepared a document which, when adopted, will form part of the Local Development Framework, and will provide the basis of decisions on land use and spatial planning affecting Tunbridge Wells Borough.

The Conservation Area Appraisal for Cranbrook together with associated documents, can be viewed on, and downloaded from the Council's website www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk - click on 'LDF Consultation'. They are also available for public inspection at the Council's offices at:

Gateway
Centre
8 Grosvenor Road
Royal Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN1 2AB

Weald Information
The Old Fire Station
Cranbrook
Kent TN17 3HF

These offices are open between 9am and 5pm (Monday to Friday). The Gateway is also open till 6:30pm on Thursdays and from 10am to 4pm on Saturdays.

Representations relating to the Cranbrook Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document can be returned to the Borough Council as follows:

Via the portal at **http://consult.tunbridgewells.gov.uk**

On line by e-mailing to **planning.policy@tunbridgewells.gov.uk**

By post to:
Planning Policy, Planning Services
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Civic Way
Royal Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN1 1RS

By fax to: **01892 554076**

Only representations that are made in writing (including electronically) and arrive at the addresses or the sites specified above within the six-week period from Monday 7 December 2009 to Monday 18 January 2010 will have the right to be considered.

Jim Kehoe
Head of Planning Services
Town Hall Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS

Dated 5 December 2009

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) ORDER 1995
NOTICE OF THE MAKING OF A DIRECTION UNDER ARTICLE 4(1) TO WHICH ARTICLE 5(4) APPLIES

NOTICE is hereby given that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council ("the Authority") has made a Direction under Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 to which Article 5(4) applies ("the Direction").

The Direction applies to development of the type specified in the First Schedule to this Notice within the area described in the Second Schedule to this Notice.

The effect of the Direction is that permission granted by article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 shall not apply to development of the type specified in the First Schedule to this Notice and that such development shall not be carried out within the area specified in the Second Schedule to this Notice unless planning permission is granted by the Authority on an application made to the Authority under Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

A copy of the Direction and of the map defining the area of land covered by it may be seen at the Council's Tunbridge Wells Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2AB between the hours of 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday (except Thursday 9am to 6.30pm) or 10am and 4pm on Saturday.

The Direction was made by the Authority on 25th November 2009 and comes into force in relation to the area specified in the Second Schedule to this Notice on the date on which this Notice is first published. However, the Direction will expire on 24th May 2010 unless it is approved by the Secretary of State before that date.

FIRST SCHEDULE

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995

SCHEDULE 2 PART 2 - MINOR OPERATIONS

Class A

The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.

Class B

The formation, laying out and construction of a means of access to a highway which is not a trunk road or classified road, where that access is required in connection with permitted development, being development comprised within Class B of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the said Order

SCHEDULE 2 PART 4 - TEMPORARY BUILDINGS AND USES

Class B

The use of the land for any purpose for not more than 28 days in total in any calendar year, of which not more than 14 days in total may be for the purposes referred to in paragraph B.2, and the provision on the land of any movable structure for the purpose of the permitted use.

SECOND SCHEDULE

Land at Longbrooks Farm, Pearsons Green Road, Paddock Wood, Kent having an area of some 27.315 hectares with a frontages of approximately 919.8 metres to Pearsons Green Road and approximately 531.8 metres to Knowle Road

Paul Cummins, Legal Services Manager,
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council,
Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1RS.
Dated : 5th December 2009

HIGHWAYS - District of Dover

EFFINGHAM STREET, DOVER (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the installation of traffic calming measures, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Effingham Street, Dover from the junction with Saxon Street, on or after 7 December 2009 for an estimated period of 4 days or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be: eastbound via Norman Street; westbound via Norman Street, Priory Road, Ladywell, Park Street, Maison Dieu Road, Pencester Road, Biggin Street, Priory Road and Folkestone Road.

There will be a suspension of the One-way Traffic Order in Effingham Street, between the junctions of Norman Street and Folkestone Road to allow traffic to exit from Saxon Street.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Gravesham

HIGHVIEW, MEOPHAM/VIGO (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Highview, Meopham/Vigo fronting 250 to 260.

The Order will become effective on 21st December 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 2 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Highview, Erskine Road, Highview.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate carriageway repairs to be safely undertaken.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Maidstone

LUGHORSE LANE, YALDING (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Lughorse Lane, Yalding outside Horseshoe Cottage on or after Tuesday 8th December 2009 for a period of up to 2 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the above restriction is for eastbound traffic via B210 Yalding Hill, Vicarage Road, West Street, Lughorse Lane and for westbound traffic vice versa.

South East Water Ltd apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to provide a new water connection. Should you require any further information regarding these works, their contact is Amelia Fauklin of Clancy Docwra on 01634 873084.

SCRAGGED OAK ROAD, DETLING REAR OF DETLING COUNTY SHOWGROUND (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2007 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Scragged Oak Road, Detling, from junction Cox Street south to junction Broader Lane on or after Tuesday 8th December 2009 when required for a period of up to 1 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for traffic via Broader Lane, Hermitage Lane, Scragged Oak Road.

BT Openreach apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary for tree cutting and aerial renewal in the area. Should you require any further information about these works, their contact is Tracey Zeal of A Plant Lux Traffic Control on 08700500792.

HIGHWAYS - District of Sevenoaks

PARK LANE, SEVENOAKS (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Park Lane, Sevenoaks between its junctions with Hollybush Lane to Seal Hollow Road.

The Order will become effective on 7th December 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to commence 8th December 2009 and last 1 week. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Hollybush Lane, Bayham Road, Serpentine Road, Bayham Road and Seal Hollow Road.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate carriageway patching.

MILL LANE, SEVENOAKS (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Mill Lane, Sevenoaks between Weavers Lane outside number 38.

The Order will become effective on 7th December 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 2 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Weavers Lane, Greatness Lane, A25 Seal Road and Mill Lane.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate carriageway patching.

HIGHWAYS - District of Shepway

VARIOUS ROADS, SHEPWAY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Carriageway Surfacing works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on various roads, Shepway from as described in column 1 of the schedule to this order on 9 December 2009 for an estimated period of as described in column three of the schedule to this order or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via as described in "diversion" rows of the schedule to this order.

Schedule

Road Name: **Castle Hill Avenue**
Extent: Junction with Sandgate roundabout
Dates: 9th and 10th December 2009 between 19:00 and 05:00
Diversion: Eastbound: Earls Avenue, Bouverie Road West, Cheriton Gardens, Middleburg Square, Cheriton Road, Middleburg Square and Cheriton Place. Westbound: The Leas, **Clifton Crescent, Earls Avenue**

Road Name: **Clifton Gardens, Folkestone**
Extent: Entire Length
Dates: 9th & 10th December 2009 between 19:00 & 05:00
Diversion: The Kent County Council (Various Roads, Shepway) (Prohibition and Restriction of traffic Movements) Consolidation Order 2004 Schedule 6, no.24 is temporarily suspended

Road Name: **Langhorne Gardens, Folkestone**
Extent: Entire Length
Dates: 9th & 10th December 2009 between 19:00 & 05:00
Diversion: The Kent County Council (Various Roads, Shepway) (Prohibition and Restriction of traffic Movements) Consolidation Order 2004 Schedule 6, no.50 is temporarily suspended

Road Name: **Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone**
Extent: Between Sandgate Road and Bouverie Road West
Dates: 9th & 10th December 2009 between 19:00 & 05:00
Diversion: The Kent County Council (Various Roads, Shepway) (Prohibition and Restriction of traffic Movements) Consolidation Order 2004 Schedule 6, no's 15 and 16 are temporarily suspended

Road Name: **Castle Road, Hythe**
Extent: Between Tanners Hill and Hillcrest Road
Dates: 10th December for five nights 2009 between 19:00 & 05:00
Diversion: School Road, Brockhill Road and Hillcrest Road

Road Name: **Cherry Garden Lane, Folkestone**
Extent: Between Shearway Road and Tile Kiln Lane
Dates: 15th December 2009 for three nights between 19:00 & 05:00
Diversion: Cherry Garden Avenue, Cheriton Road, Cherry Garden Avenue and Cherry Garden Lane

Road Name: **Tile Kiln Lane, Folkestone**
Extent: Between Cherry Garden Lane and Ashley Avenue
Dates: 15th December 2009 for three nights between 19:00 & 05:00
Diversion: Ashley Avenue, Cheriton Road, Cherry Garden Avenue and Cherry Garden Lane

HOPE LANE, ST MARY IN THE MARSH (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the reconstruction of Paternosterford Bridge, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Hope Lane, St Mary in the Marsh, either side of Paternosterford Bridge, on or after 8 December 2009. This is initially for an estimated period of 2 weeks for pre-construction testing. There will be a subsequent closure scheduled for mid-February 2010 for the actual bridge reconstruction.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Cockreed Lane, Ashford Road and the Lane from Ashford Road to the junction with Turnagate Cottage, locally known as a continuation of Five Vents Lane.

This Order will come into force from 8 December 2009, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected, and will remain valid for a maximum period of eighteen months.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

RIDING LANE, HILDENBOROUGH (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Riding Lane outside of 1 Gardeners Hope Cottages on or after Monday 7th December 2009 for a period of up to 1 week or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the above restriction is for southbound traffic via Hildenborough Road, Underriver House Road, Mill Lane, Vines Lane and for northbound traffic vice versa.

Hutton Construction Ltd apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to provide a connection to a mains sewer. Should you require any further information regarding these works, their contact is Mr Leigh French on 01279 647333.

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
(Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2009

In accordance with Section 96 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Borough Council is required to publicise that it has made the above order, dated 20th November 2009. A copy of the order and associated map is available for public inspection at the Council Offices, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4LZ. Copies are also available on the Council website, www.tmbc.gov.uk.

David Hughes, Chief Executive
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill
West Malling, Kent ME19 4LZ
20 November 2009

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

NOTICE UNDER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SECTION 123 (2A)

LAND AT OXLEY SHAW LANE LEYBOURNE

Notice is hereby given that Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council intends to dispose (leasehold disposal) of an area of land to Leybourne Parish Council – Leybourne Community Group for the construction of a play area, at Oxley Shaw Lane Leybourne. (as identified on the plans which are available for inspection at Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council offices at the address below) which consists of part of an open space.

Objections to the intended disposal of land must be made in writing and addressed to:

Katie Iggulden (BSC HONS) MRICS
Estates Services Manager
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive
Kings Hill, West Malling
Kent, ME19 4LZ

By no later than 4 January 2010
Dated the 6 day of December 2009

DAVID HUGHES
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC PATH ORDER

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

BRIDLEWAY MT50 HILDENBOROUGH

PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION ORDER 2009

The above named Order (hereinafter referred to as the Order) was made on 1 December 2009. The effect of the Order will be to divert that part of the public bridleway MT50 at Hildenborough, which commences at point A (NGR TQ 5908 4987) and runs in a northerly direction for approximately 89 metres to point C (NGR TQ 5906 4995) to a new length of footpath numbered MT50, with a width of 3 metres commencing at point B (NGR TQ 5907 4986) and running in a north easterly direction for approximately 97 metres to point C all as shown on the Order Plan.

All directions are general and all distances approximate.

A copy of the Order and plan have been placed on deposit along with an Explanatory Statement and may be inspected free of charge during normal office hours at the Council's offices at Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling and Tonbridge Castle. Copies of the Order and plan may be purchased.

Any representations or objections to the Order may be sent in writing to the Chief Solicitor at the address below and should arrive not later than 4 January 2010 and should state the grounds on which they are made. If no such representations or objections are duly made, or if any so made are withdrawn, the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council may confirm the Order as an unopposed Order. If the Order is sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment for confirmation any representations or objections which have not been withdrawn will be sent with the Order.

David Hughes
Chief Executive
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Gibson Drive, Kings Hill
West Malling, ME19 4LZ

Dated 1 December 2009

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NEWAYENERGY LIMITED

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of creditors of the above-named Company will be held at 141 Parrock Street, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1EY, on 11 December 2009, at 11.30 am for the purposes mentioned in Sections 100 and 101 of the said Act. A list of names and addresses of the Company's creditors will be available for inspection free of charge at 141 Parrock Street, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1EY, on 9th and 10th December 2009, the two business days before the date of the meeting.
Dated: 1 December 2009
By Order of the Board
Philip Andriesz, Director

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Notice of application to vary a Premises Licence under Section 34 of the Licensing Act 2003

Notice is hereby given that ASK Restaurants Limited in respect of Premises known as Zizzi, 46-50 Earl Street, Maidstone, ME14 1PS applied to Maidstone Borough Council for a Variation of a Premises Licence. The proposed variation is: To vary the licence in accordance with the plans submitted by the applicant. Permitted hours and licensable activities remain as existing. Any representations by an interested party or responsible authority regarding the above-mentioned application must be received in writing by Licensing Department, Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, ME15 6JQ no later than 25 December 2009 stating the grounds for objection. The register of Maidstone Borough Council and the record of the application may be inspected at the address of the council, given above, during normal business hours or on the council's website - www.maidstone.gov.uk

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence is £5,000.

Poppleston Allen, Licensing Solicitors, 37 Stoney Street, The Lace Market, Nottingham, NG1 1LS

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2004 AS AMENDED BY THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 AND 2009.

REGULATION 17 – NOTICE OF SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE MATTERS AND STATEMENT OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS UNDER REGULATION 17: CONSULTATION ON DRAFT COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION SERVICE STRATEGIES IN KENT DOCUMENT, KENT COUNTY COUNCIL. (2009).

On the 30th March 2009 the County Council formally approved the Draft Community Infrastructure Provision Service Strategies document as Supplementary Guidance, for public consultation.

The purpose of this Supplementary Guidance is to:

- Provide the evidence base to inform the preparation of Local Development Documents, by Local Planning Authorities, concerning those service delivery matters which are the statutory responsibility of the Kent County Council.
- Inform interested parties of those projects which the County Council proposes to implement within the next 3 to 5 years in accordance with its Medium Term Financial Plan and of the likely requirement for financial contributions from central government and the private sector to support such provision.

The guidance sets out the national context for the provision of community services: primary and secondary education; youth services; adult education; libraries and archives; and adult social services and then explains how this framework will be applied in the delivery and management of particular projects and services in the districts/ boroughs in the County Council's administrative area, (which excludes Medway unitary area), to ensure the development of sustainable communities pursuant to Planning Policy Statement no.1. The document will be updated periodically to reflect new and emerging requirements based on proposals in Local Development Documents as they are adopted by district planning authorities.

The guidance has been prepared pursuant to the advice in paragraph 6.3 of Planning Policy Statement 12 which permits County Councils and other administrative bodies, to produce information in support of and to inform the preparation of LDD's by Local Planning Authorities. The PPS advises that such guidance should be subject to the same provisions of publicity and adoption as required by Regulations 17 and 18 of the Town and Country Local Development (England)Regulations 2004 (as amended) following which it may be regarded as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and planning appeals.

The statutory consultation period will commence on 9th December 2009 and will end on 20th January 2010.

You are invited to participate in the preparation of this guidance by commenting on the document. Copies of the document can be viewed/downloaded from the Council's web site at www.kent.gov.uk/publications/community-and-living/guide-to-development-contributions.htm .

The draft Community Infrastructure Provision Supplementary Guidance and a copy of the relevant SD matters and Statement of consultation, will be available for inspection at the Kent County Council's principal office, County Hall, Maidstone; District Council main offices; and main libraries in the County, during normal office hours. Local Libraries will also have direct access to the County Council's web site where this information may be reviewed. The Guidance is also available on request, from the postal or e-mail addresses shown below.

Representations on the Guidance should be made in writing to the address below:

Community Infrastructure Provision Service Strategies in Kent

Supplementary Guidance Consultation
Development and Investment Team
Regeneration and Economy Division
Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XJ

Or via e-mail to: DIT.CIP.Responses@kent.gov.uk

Representations may be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specific address of the adoption of the Supplementary Guidance. The Council must receive representations no later than 5.00pm on 20th January 2010.

Development and Investment Team
Chief Executive's Directorate
Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME141XJ

December 2009.

Kent County Council

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS – NOTICES OF APPLICATIONS

The following applications have been submitted to the Council and are being advertised for the reason(s) given in each case.

TM/09/02918/FL – Littlefield Church Road West Peckham Maidstone Kent ME18 5JL – Mrs Nicola Gibb is applying for conservatory to the front of existing dwelling. Reason: CA HH

TM/09/02825/FL – 2 The Laurels Addington Green Addington West Malling Kent ME19 5BB – Mr P Annis is applying for conservatory (Resubmission of TM09/02067/FL). Reason: LB CA HH

TM/09/02780/FL & TM/09/02781/CA – Mankash Tree Lane Plaxtol Sevenoaks Kent TN15 0QA – Dr L Sashdeva are applying for demolition of existing garage and construction of detached house and detached garage. Reason: CA

Reasons for the case being publicised:

LB Application relates to/affects a Listed Building or its setting
CA Application is within/affects a Conservation Area
HH Householder application - As this is a householder application, in the event of an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, which is to be dealt with on the basis of representations in writing, any representations made about this application will be sent to the Secretary of State, and there will be no further opportunity to comment at appeal stage.

These applications are displayed on our website www.tmbc.gov.uk – click on the button "Online Planning" (then View Existing Applications and select Public Access). You can submit your comments by emailing to planning.applications@tmbc.gov.uk (please quote the application number by the date set out below). Please note that we will publish a copy of any representations received on the Council's website, including your name and address.

Copies of applications listed may be seen during office hours (8.30 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday). Any applications within Hadlow, Hildenborough and Tonbridge are available at Tonbridge Castle, Tonbridge. Other applications are available at the office of the Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ. Any representations should be made in writing quoting the application number by 27 December 2009.

David Hughes
Chief Executive
6 December 2009

Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

09/03603/HOUSE Oak Cottage Iden Green Road, Benenden (LB) (CA)
- Extension to provide link between existing dwelling and outbuilding. Conversion of part of outbuilding to utility room and wc with removal of ground floor wc in existing dwelling

09/03605/LBC Oak Cottage Iden Green Road, Benenden (LB)
- Listed Building Consent: Extension to provide link between existing dwelling and outbuilding. Conversion of part of outbuilding to utility room and wc with removal of ground floor wc in existing dwelling

09/03580/LBC Hazelden Farm Marden Road, Cranbrook (LB)
- Listed building consent - Utility room to Hazelden Barn

09/03507/LBC 8 York Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Culverden (LB)
- Listed Building Consent - Replacing plastic window with wooden single glazed window

09/03649/FUL 6 Clarence Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Culverden (CA)
- Erection of arbour in garden to provide open learning area

09/01775/LBC 9A - 15G The Pantiles Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pantiles & St Marks (LB)
- Listed Building Consent - Installation of 80cm communal satellite antenna at roof level for the residents

09/03544/FUL Woolworths 13 - 17 Calverley Road, Park (CA)
- Refurbishment of existing retail unit and installation of new shop front and signage

09/03627/HOUSE Flat 8 54 - 56 Grove Hill Road, Park (CA)
- Loft conversion to provide additional bedroom with 5 velux windows

09/03198/HOUSE Albans Barn Romford Road, Pembury (LB)
- Detached garage

09/03521/HOUSE 5 Lower Green Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Rusthall (LB)
- Internal alterations; Replace garage doors with windows to front, construct a single storey summer room to rear and 3 conservation rooflights to rear pitch roof

09/03523/LBC 5 Lower Green Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Rusthall (LB)
- Listed Building Consent - Internal alterations to provide cloakroom, new shower room and bathroom to first floor and bathroom to loft floor. Replace garage doors with windows to front, construct a single storey summer room to rear and 3 conservation rooflights to rear pitch roof

09/03559/FUL Land Between Poundfield, Bryn Tirion & Manor Cottage Bodiam Road, Sandhurst (CA) (LB)
- Erection of two detached dwellings, ancillary access and landscaping, formation of parking bay for Bryn Tirion and replacement garage for Fern Cottage

09/03448/FULMJ Unit 6 Former Car And Retail Site, Sherwood (MAJOR)
- Variation of condition 3 of TW/07/02381/FULMJ - restricting the range of goods sold

09/03467/LBC Hawkridge Barn The Common, Sissinghurst C/O Cranbrook Parish (LB)
- Listed Building Consent - Replace 4 existing windows and doors with new double glazed joinery, finished to match existing

09/03537/LBC Hartridge Manor Oast Paley Lane, Sissinghurst C/O Cranbrook Parish (LB)
- Listed Building Consent - Conversion and reconstruction of roundels to create residential dwelling with integral garage

09/03611/FUL Meadow View London Lane, Sissinghurst C/O Cranbrook Parish (LB)
- Demolition of existing cottage and replace with a 4 bedroom residential dwelling

(DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROW) Affecting A Public Right of Way (CA) Affecting a Conservation Area (LB) Affecting a Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk), at the The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. We accept comments online, by email to planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date.

You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

Jim Kehoe
Head of Planning Services
Town Hall Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS

Dated: 05 December 2009

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

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Award-winning Astra has just gone up a gear

By **STEVE LOADER**

IT WAS not to be – a second successive victory for Vauxhall in the prestigious European Car of the Year contest.

But the new Astra gave a good account of itself in its COTY 2010 bid to follow the bigger Insignia's 2009 award win, losing out to the winning VW Polo supermini and Toyota's second-placed IQ city car.

Nevertheless, the British-built family hatchback has already won awards on the Continent and scored a five-star maximum in the newly-upweighted Euro NCAP crash test just days ahead of its UK launch on December 11.

The number of NCAP stars now reflects a car's overall performance in four key areas – adult protection, child safety, pedestrian protection and safety assist – rather than allowing passenger safety to headline.

The safety check also awarded the highest points ever for the Astra's active head restraints, which protect against whiplash – the most common occupant injury in a rear-end shunt – and the system does not need re-setting by the dealer after the accident.

Under new developments at Vauxhall's US parent General Motors, the future of the Astra plant at Ellesmere Port on Merseyside also looks assured; due reward for efficiency gains there that enabled the site to 'pitch' successfully for the right to build the car. Workers there have now heard they will build the estate model alongside the five-door already online.

Having now tried all launch engines in the latter, I can also report that this new sixth generation Astra is hard to fault.

While I'm impressed by the diesels, expected to take most sales and especially in the company sector, the petrol line-up makes a powerful case on price and flexibility.

The best and fastest drive so far is the 1.6 Turbo SRi, but a £20,555 price tag – and you won't get much leeway on that at launch – is a bit steep.

Still, it will hit 60mph in less than eight seconds, has neat on-road handling and poise, great refinement and all the toys and feels like it belongs in the sector above. It should also average around 40mpg if you avoid practising for the hot VXR version that's surely in the pipeline.

I'm still drawn to the 1.4 Turbo though – the well-appointed SE costs £19,490 – and this does the sprint in nine seconds, while achieving an average closer to 50mpg. It lets you know when it is being revved, but feels light on its feet.

However, company car 'user choosers' and long distance drivers won't be disappointed by the 1.7 diesels, available in 110PS (108bhp) and 125PS (123bhp).

I drove the 110 in supposedly cheap and cheerful Exclusiv trim (£18,015) – Astra prices start at £15,675 – but the cabin space and quality is impressive and you can eke out an average of around 60mpg.

It needs nearly 12 second to hit 60mph, so some may prefer the 125PS's 10.7 seconds at no cost to fuel economy.

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Official Government Test Environmental Data – Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): The All New Astra Range: urban – from 28.8 (9.9) to 49.6 (5.7), Extra-urban – from 50.4 (5.6) to 68.9 (4.1), Combined – from 39.8 (7.1) to 60.1 (4.7). CO_2 Emissions from 167 to 124g/km.

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AGILA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
05	55	Agila Expression	1.0	5	Star silver	24,800	3,695
08	58	Agila Club A/c	1.2	5	Steel Silver	4,385	7,995
09	09	Agila Design Auto	1.2	5	Sugar white	2,290	9,695
09	09	Agila Design	1.2	5	Lemon grass	4,150	8,995
09	09	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Atlanta blue	6,230	9,995
09	09	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Star silver	5,210	9,995

ASTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	06	Astra Sxi	1.6	3	Black sapphire	30,000	7,995
06	56	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Panacotta	21,950	8,995
06	56	Astra Active	1.6	5	Silver lightening	36,800	7,495
07	57	Astra Sri Ex Pack	1.8	5	Black sapphire	26,000	9,495
07	57	Astra Design Auto	1.8	5	Moonland	7,825	9,495
08	08	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Black sapphire	15,890	9,495
08	08	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.4	3	Flame red	11,225	10,495
08	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Green spirit	3,725	10,495
08	58	Astra Sri X Pack	1.8	3	Black sapphire	5,960	12,495
09	09	Astra Breeze Plus	1.6	5	Metro blue	5,950	9,995
09	09	Astra Breeze CDTi	1.7D	5	Metro blue	4,720	10,895
09	09	Astra Breeze CDTi	1.7D	5	Silver lightening	7,190	10,845
09	09	Astra Breeze Sports hatch	1.7D	3	Black sapphire	6,250	11,695
09	09	Astra Sxi	1.4	5	Flame red	2,500	9,995

CORSA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
00	X*	Corsa Comfort Auto	1.4	3	Star silver	69,325	2,995
06	56	Corsa Design	1.4	5	Silver lightening	39,050	5,995
07	57	Corsa Design	1.2	3	Air blue	21,575	7,495
07	57	Corsa Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Air blue	25800	8,495
08	57	Corsa VXR	1.6	3	Arden blue	14,950	12,995
08	08	Corsa Breeze	1.2	3	Star silver	12,220	7,995
08	58	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	1.3	5	Silver lightening	12775	9,495
08	58	Corsa Design CDTi	1.3	3	Metro blue	6,425	9,495
09	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	5	Metro blue	11,390	8,995
08	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	5	Black sapphire	7,070	9,295
09	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/C	1.3	3	Black sapphire	9,670	9,650
09	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	1.3	3	Flame red	9,270	9,650
09	09	Corsa Active	1.2	5	Silver lightening	6,520	8,995
09	09	Corsa Sxi	1.2	3	Black sapphire	6,236	9,495
09	09	Corsa Design In Touch	1.2	3	Black sapphire	3,380	9,495

INSIGNIA & SIGNUM

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	56	Signum Elite Auto CDTi	1.9D	5	Misty grey	51,685	8,995
09	58	Insignia Elite Auto Nav	2.0	5	Star silver	6,300	19,995
09	09	Insignia Sports Tourer Exclusiv (160)	1.9D	5	Panacotta	12,000	16,995
09	09	Insignia Elite CDTi Auto (160)	1.9D	4	Black sapphire	8,250	22,995
09	09	Insignia Sports Tourer Exclusiv (160)	1.9D	5	Silver lightening	5,925	17,495

MERIVA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
03	53*	Meriva Enjoy	1.6	5	Star silver	86,875	3,495
06	56	Meriva Life A/C	1.4	5	Steel blue	19,730	6,995
07	57	Meriva Design CDTi	1.7D	5	Star silver	34,950	8,995
08	58	Meriva CDTi Breeze Plus	1.3	5	Black sapphire	10,930	9,995
09	09	Meriva Active CDTi	1.3D	5	Ultra blue	8,750	10,695

TIGRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	06	Tigra Exclusiv	1.4	2	Air blue	30,500	8,995

VECTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	06	Vectra elite CDTi (150)	1.9D	5	Black Sapphire	38,125	8,995
06	56	Vectra Exclusiv	1.8	5	Star silver	26,250	6,495
07	07	Vectra Exclusiv CDTi Auto	1.9D	5	Silver lightening	19,350	8,995
08	58	Vectra Exclusive	1.8	5	Black sapphire	15,390	9,995
08	58	Vectra Exclusive CDTi	1.9D	5	Black sapphire	12,700	10,695

ZAFIRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
04	54*	Zafira Design DTi	2.0D	5	Prestige blue	67,850	5,495
05	05*	Zafira Design CDTi	1.9D	5	Star silver	66,000	7,795
06	56	Zafira Club	1.6	5	Metro blue	40,250	7,995
06	56	Zafira Club Auto	1.8	5	Silver lightening	12,120	8,495
09	09	Zafira Sri XP CDTi	1.9D	5	Star silver	3,780	17,995

OTHER MAKES

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
05	55*	Ford Focus Zetec	1.6	5	Metallic grey	53,050	6,295

DUE SOON

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
07	57	Vectra CDTi Elite (150ps)	1.9D	5	Black sapphire	41,000	9,995
08	58	Astra Sri Sports hatch CDTi 150ps	1.9D	3	Power red	16,000	13,495
08	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Flame red	12,000	10,495
07	57	Meriva Design CDTi	1.7D	5	Star silver	34,950	8,995

*non Network Q

All mileages are approximate, as vehicles are still in use at the present time

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From only £9995
• Air con • Alloy wheels • CD player
SAVE £3490

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FIRST GEAR

Compiled by Matthew Beech

Masked monster has everyday style

IT LOOKS forbidding with its black mask, but the newly-launched £16,695 Seat Ibiza Bocanegra hot hatchback is a useable everyday car.

It just happens to have beefy looks, power and handling. It is offered only with the existing Cupra powertrain: a 180PS (178bhp) 1.4-litre turbocharged and supercharged petrol engine paired with a new seven-speed VW twin-clutch DSG auto 'box.

This allows the Bocanegra – 'black mouth' in Spanish – to be a docile city car. On the open road though, gears can be selected manually and swiftly using the floor-mounted change or Formula One paddle shifts.

Our recent first drive revealed excellent on-road poise and feedback – it really is as much fun as it is easy to live with. Dramatic add-ons – masked front, honeycomb meshing, prominent alloys and big trapezoidal exhaust – underline the car's ultimate ability though.

Why Bocanegra? It's a nostalgic reference to the nickname coined for a sporting Seat built from 1975-79, and distinguished by an all-black front end.

Mazda3's top marks for safety

MAZDA has secured a maximum five-star safety rating for its Ford Focus class contender.

The Mazda3 hatchback and saloon's achievement is all the more impressive due to more stringent evaluation for the influential European New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP).

This means that the various categories – adult occupant protection, child protection, pedestrian protection and safety assist – now all contribute to the overall rating, where as passenger safety dominated the ratings previously.

The Mazda3 is also the second by this carmaker to gain the five-star maximum under the new system – the latest Mazda6 achieved the same ranking in February.

'Real' plug-in car is finally here

MITSUBISHI's all-electric MiEV city car is here.

Based upon the conventional petrol-powered five-door iCar from the same brand, 25 have landed in the UK for a Government trial.

Mitsubishi claims it is the first full-production electric vehicle with zero tailpipe emissions made available by a mainstream manufacturer; a genuine car with no compromise in cabin space, seating four with room for luggage.

It can top 81mph, travel 100 miles and be trickle charged from flat to full in six hours via any UK three-pin socket, costing just 96p for a full charge.

On sale in Japan since July, it has been a sell-out success and will soon be available to the public here (priced to be announced).

Peugeot and Citroën are also set to market versions.

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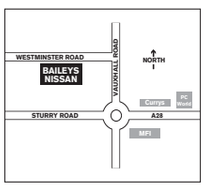

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^ New cash prices shown include £2,000 Scrappage incentive. The Government Scrappage Scheme is available from 18/05/2009 until the Government funding is utilised or until 28/02/2010 (whichever is sooner). Trade in vehicles under the Government Scheme must have been registered on or before 29/02/2000. The keeper of a trade in vehicle should have a UK address shown on the V5C and have been the registered keeper of the trade in vehicle for at least 12 calendar months before the order date of the new vehicle. Also a trade in vehicle must have a current MOT certificate at order date of the new vehicle and must be under 3.5 tonnes in weight. Full Terms and Conditions apply (see your local Nissan dealership for details). Schemes available at participating Nissan dealers only. Schemes not available in conjunction with Motability or any other offers. Terms and Conditions subject to change without prior notice. Excludes Channel Islands / Isle of Man. All prices include £55 first registration fee and road fund licence. Model shots shown are for illustration purposes only. Information correct at time of going to press. Refer to dealer for exact specification. This advert supersedes any previously advertised offers. Models subject to availability. PIXO shown has optional metallic paint at £365 including 15% VAT, Micra shown has optional metallic paint at £395 including 15% VAT, NOTE shown has optional metallic paint at £395 including 15% VAT. Nissan Motor (GB) Ltd, The Rivers Office Park, Denham Way, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 9YS.

Hot Leons to suit all pockets

SEAT is living up to its ambition to be the VW group's affordable sporting brand, ***writes Steve Loader***.

It has not only added impressive sporting versions of its Ibiza hatchback to the line-up, but also upgraded the bigger Leon.

I've just driven two versions of the latter back-to-back, the Cupra performance flagship and the not-so-poor man's 1.4 TSI and both entertain as well as offering five-door practicality.

The Cupra has always been a favourite of mine in the hot hatch sector; with lots of VW Golf underpinnings there is no doubting the engineering, but the addition of some Spanish flair in the design adds a new dimension.

Like many Seats it also looks the business in bold colours like red, yellow and white as well as what I call 'stealth black'. And it's a lot of fast car for the money at £20,450 – a five-door Golf GTI costs £3,000 more.

I never weary of the visual trickery of having the rear door handles in the door frame, making the rakish Leon look more like a three-door coupé, but I am tiring of the drab interior – as I commented in our Motors TV video of the pre-facelift Cupra at www.carsforkent.co.uk.

What is wrong with some red seatbelts and some sporty red trimming?

To be fair, Seat has addressed this a little in the revised car with a smart £1,200 quilted leather seat option, but the dash is still grim and the brand has rather highlighted it by porting over the smart dashboard of the Audi A4 Cabrio for the new Seat Exeo Audi A4 spin-off – the next generation Leon had better have a 'dash' of that style and quality.

However, much of my griping disappears in the driving; the Cupra feels solid, has tons of grip and power and, impressively, can apply the 240PS (237bhp) using sophisticated electronics to overcome any battling between tyres and steering wheel.

But if this competitively priced hot hatch is beyond your means, £15,950 gets you into the well-specc'd 1.4 TSI SE; the turbocharged engine still hits 62mph in less than 10 seconds, doesn't make a lot of fuss and has the generic sharp-handling of the Leon range. You should also average around 45mpg too.

St George's back in the fight

LONG-RUNNING St George's Garage in Cliftonville has re-opened as a used car and servicing outlet with a specialist theme.

Partners Bob Booth and Ross Andrews (pictured right and left) will sell all makes, but aim to cater for the site's former VW customers, as well as drawing on Bob's lengthy experience as an after-sales manager for the upmarket Audi and Mercedes-Benz brands.

Bob said that while many Thanet new car franchises had suffered from the draw of 'motor city' at Broad Oak Canterbury, he and Ross felt there was still a call for quality used sales and servicing and St George's – latterly a Chevrolet outlet that closed in May – was still a landmark site.

"People know where it is and it's perfect for the quality used end of the market like VW," said Bob. "Cars like the Golf are reliable and hold their value and there is always a strong call for them."

But he was also keen to deal in upmarket cars and particularly rates the Mercedes C-Class and Audi A4.

Conscious of the economic climate, the partners – aided by family and friends – have done much of the sprucing up of the site themselves, though they did splash out on a formal opening to underline they were open for business again after the six-month closure.

Ross said: "The plan is to carry about 12-15 cars until early next year when we hope to move to 20-30 – we are very much aware that we are starting a business at the worst time, but if you can make a go of it now then the sky's the limit."

Perfect little number. The new Polo. From £9,435.

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New Polo S 1.2 60 PS 3-door, 3-year, 10,000 miles per annum Solutions example.			
34 monthly payments of	£99.00	Amount of credit	£6,633.91
Deposit	£2,801.09	Total amount payable	£10,744.09
Acceptance fee*	£125.00	Option to purchase fee†	£60.00
Optional final payment	£4,392.00	Excess mileage (per mile)**	3.60p
Retail cash price	£9,435.00		

Typical 8.1% APR *Payable as first payment. †Payable within optional final payment. **Excess mileage is subject to the prevailing rate of VAT. Further charges may be payable if vehicle is returned. Retail sales only. Indemnities may be required. Subject to status. Available to over 18s for registrations and deliveries before December 31st, 2009 (subject to availability). Volkswagen Finance, Freepost VWFS. Offer may be varied or withdrawn at anytime.

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Official fuel consumption for the new Polo in mpg (litres/100km): urban 38.7 (7.3); extra urban 62.8 (4.5); combined 51.4 (5.5). CO_2 emissions 128g/km.

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Polo matches mood with

TIMING for this road test was spot on – the VW Polo was this week voted European Car of the Year 2010.

In winning this most prestigious of car awards and bringing the trophy to VW for the first time since the Golf Mk III's 1992 COTY win, the VW supermini also pipped strong challenges from the innovative Toyota IQ city car and latest Vauxhall Astra.

But the fifth generation Polo – I'm discounting some dodgy facelifts sometimes touted as 'new' models – is well-timed in a wider context.

Looking more like a Golf that shrunk in the wash, VW has produced a classier, lighter and roomier Polo to match the modern trend; you can happily downsize and economise with this after giving up something larger.

Its styling echoes the latest Golf and VW's reborn Scirocco – one of the sharpest looking and most affordable coupés around – and yet it rightly lacks the visual verve of the latest Ford Fiesta.

For it may be a small car – though looking about the same size as the original Golf – but the Polo has always been something of a premium buy and ought to be more reserved.

The upmarket and bigger car impression delivered by a classy exterior is emphasised by an understated, but seemingly rock solid interior that is well-arranged and uses high quality soft-touch plastics and well designed seats.

The boot is a good size with easy fold-flat rear seats for extra large cargoes and there is even a secret compartment beneath the boot floor as well as handy bins/drawers beneath the front seats.

Any lingering qualms about chopping an older and bigger motor for this baby are then finally banished by a tidy drive, plus a ride quality and refinement that really would not disgrace a car two sizes bigger.

DrivingReview

by **STEVE LOADER**

CHIEF DRIVING CORRESPONDENT
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

VWPolo

Clever sound-deadening work done to the latest Golf seems to have been lavished on its little brother and is even more impressive on this scale of car.

Some of this is undone by the little 70PS (69bhp) three-cylinder petrol unit in our Polo 1.2-litre SE five-door test car (£11,995), but I don't dislike this engine – carried over from the previous line-up – even if temptation to exploit its enthusiasm leads to cabin buzz.

Steady cruising on or off motorway is no problem though and the crisp gearshift and sure-footed handling make it entertaining on quieter roads – a turbocharged GTI is eagerly-awaited.

And I'm sure this three-pot unit is no more uneven than diesels in the range, even if VW has probably done more than most to smooth out 'oil-burners' lately.

Fuel economy apart though, a diesel in a small car is an injustice; the extra weight stealing much of the nimbleness and insidiously wearing tyres and front-end components faster while the owner laps up cheaper fuel bills.

Ironically, having done so much to create this shift to diesel though, VW is now advancing the opposite case and expects 83 per cent of new Polo sales to be petrol.

Even with a five-speed gearbox, the test car's low-emission engine can average around 50mpg and is a relatively low emitter (128g/km CO2), though still incurring annual road tax of £120 against the £35 of its current 1.6-litre diesel equivalents and tax exemption for the forthcoming BlueMotion eco model.

The diesel can also average around 65mpg, but the petrol-versus-diesel choice is much harder than before, especially when you can get into a petrol Polo for as little as £9,435 when the three-door version arrives later this month.

For now, entry price for the 1.6-litre diesels starts at an astonishing £12,605.

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Official fuel consumption in mpg for the Škoda range: Urban 19.2 (14.7) – 53.3 (5.3), Extra Urban 38.2 (7.4) – 83.1 (3.4), Combined 28.0 (10.1) – 68.9 (4.1). CO_2 emissions (g/km) Škoda Range: 109 – 235

MODEL	ENGINE	REG	YEAR	MILES	COLOUR	PRICE
FABIA CLASSIC 5DR HATCH	1.2 6v 54 BHP (PETROL)	GF54YBR	OCTOBER '04	44520	SAHARA BEIGE	£4,490.00
FABIA CLASSIC 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	GK03EZJ	JUNE '03	41910	CORRIDA RED	£3,990.00
FABIA CLASSIC 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	GN04YZA	JUNE '04	24342	GRAPHITE GREY	£4,990.00
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	KX55GYG	SEPTEMBER '05	36164	SATIN GREY	£5,490.00
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	GK55NXE	SEPTEMBER '05	14509	GRAPHITE GREY	£5,990.00
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	GL56XKB	JANUARY '07		CORRIDA RED	£6,490.00
FABIA 1 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 70 BHP (PETROL)	GD07CDV	JULY '07	17178	SATIN GREY	£7,290.00
FABIA 1 5DR HATCH	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ57WCG	OCTOBER '07	24954	SATIN GREY	£8,490.00
FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 70 BHP (PETROL)	GN57VVL	SEPTEMBER '07	9339	CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£7,990.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 70 BHP (PETROL)	GK09YFU	MARCH '09	TBA	STORM BLUE	£8,490.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.6 16v AUTO (PETROL)	GL09ARZ	JUNE '09	TBA	ARCTIC GREEN	£9,490.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ58SYG	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	TANGERINE ORANGE	£8,990.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ58SYS	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	SATIN GREY	£9,490.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ58SYR	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£9,490.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GL09APO	JULY '09	TBA	TANGERINE ORANGE	£9,990.00
FABIA 3 5DR HATCH	1.4 16v 85 BHP (PETROL)	GL57TMU	DECEMBER '07	10656	ANTHRACITE GREY	£9,290.00
FABIA 3 5DR HATCH	1.6 16v 105 BHP (PETROL)	GK57YRU	SEPTEMBER '07	6039	BLACK MAGIC	£9,790.00
FABIA CLASSIC 5DR ESTATE	1.4 MPi 68 BHP (PETROL)	GK51FWH	NOVEMBER '01	73453	STONE GREY	£3,490.00
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR ESTATE	1.4 16v 100 BHP (PETROL)	GK56VDG	SEPTEMBER '06		CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£6,990.00
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR ESTATE	1.4 TDi 70 BHP (DIESEL)	EJ05DGF	APRIL '05	44489	SAHARA BEIGE	£5,990.00

MODEL	ENGINE	REG	YEAR	MILES	COLOUR	PRICE
FABIA ELEGANCE 5DR ESTATE	1.4 16v 100BHP (PETROL)	GJ06CFN	MARCH '06	6345	SAHARA BEIGE	£7,290.00
FABIA BLUELINE 5DR ESTATE	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	LY03VVG	AUGUST '03	88394	ADMIRAL BLUE	£3,290.00
● ROOMSTER LEVEL 2 5DR MPV	1.6 16v AUTO (PETROL)	GJ09NLF	MARCH '09	TBA	POLAR BLUE	£9,990.00
ROOMSTER LEVEL 2 5DR MPV	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GL56HZA	DECEMBER '06		CORRIDA RED	£7,990.00
● ROOMSTER LEVEL 2 5DR MPV	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ09NLE	MARCH '09	TBA	BLACK MAGIC	£10,490.00
● ROOMSTER LEVEL 3 5DR MPV	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GK58NNC	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	ANTHRACITE GREY	£9,990.00
OCTAVIA CLASSIC 5DR HATCH	1.6 FSi 115 BHP (PETROL)	GJ56TVZ	SEPTEMBER '06	28487	DIAMOND SILVER	£7,290.00
OCTAVIA CLASSIC 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	RH58CAB	NOVEMBER '08	41551	CANDY WHITE	£9,490.00
OCTAVIA AMBIENTE 5DR HATCH	1.6 FSi 115 BHP (PETROL)	GJ56TWD	SEPTEMBER '06		FLAMENCO RED	£7,490.00
OCTAVIA ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GK06BTV	MARCH '06		GRAPHITE GREY	£8,290.00
● OCTAVIA ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	1.6 FSi 105 BHP (PETROL)	GK58NNE	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	FLAMENCO RED	£11,490.00
● OCTAVIA ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GK58NNH	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	SATIN GREY	£11,790.00
● OCTAVIA ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	2.0 TDi DSG (DIESEL)	GL58EKH	JANUARY '09	TBA	FLAMENCO RED	£14,990.00
OCTAVIA CLASSIC 5DR ESTATE	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GN07YNA	MARCH '07		DIAMOND SILVER	£9,290.00
● OCTAVIA AMBIENTE 5DR ESTATE	2.0 TDi DSG (DIESEL)	GJ08VAV	MARCH '08	TBA	STORM BLUE	£11,990.00
● OCTAVIA SE 5DR ESTATE	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GK09YFT	MARCH '09	TBA	CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£13,390.00

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Value	★★★★
Running costs	★★★★
Reliability	★★★★
How green?	★★★★
Road tax	£120/year
Best rival	Ford Fiesta

TheVerdict

DON'T LIKE: steep pricing and fairly basic specification on entry models

NOT SURE: it is funky enough for increasingly image conscious supermini buyers

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Vehicle shown features mica paint available at extra cost of £325. 3 years/30,000 miles full service package at an optional cost of £249. Available at participating retailers only. Not available in conjunction with any other offers. Savings against current man. rec. price and available on UK supplied vehicles ordered and registered before 31st December 2009. Prices correct at time of press. (Chev79242). Scrappage Allowance subject to eligibility, please ask for terms and conditions.

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Vehicles shown feature metallic paint available at extra cost (Matiz £325, Aveo £350, Cruze £400). 3 years/30,000 miles full service package at an optional cost of £249. Available at participating retailers only. Not available in conjunction with any other offers. Savings against current man. rec. price at time of publication and available on UK supplied vehicles ordered and registered before 31st December 2009. Prices correct at time of press.

Official Government Test Environmental Data – Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): The All New Astra Range: urban – from 28.8 (9.9) to 49.6 (5.7), Extra-urban – from 50.4 (5.6) to 68.9 (4.1), Combined – from 39.8 (7.1) to 60.1 (4.7). CO_2 Emissions from 167 to 124g/km.

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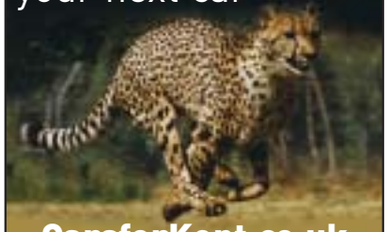

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2005 05	SAAB 9-3 1.8T Linear Sport , 4 Doors, Automatic, Saloon, Petrol, 63,277 miles, Metallic Grey, 2 Owners. Cruise control, Alloy wheels, Immobiliser, Multi function steering wheel, ABS, Cloth seat trim, Full Electric Pack, Reverse parking aid, Part Service History, Air conditioning, Climate Control, Park distance contro £7,295
2002 52	SAAB 9-5 2.3HOT Aero , 4 Doors, Manual, Saloon, Petrol, 69,000 miles, Steel Grey. ABS, Alloy wheels, Full Electric Pack, Cruise control, Park distance control, Sports seats, Traction control, Climate control, In Car Entertainment, Warranty, Leather upholstery, Metallic paintwork, Tinted glass. £5,495
2001 Y	SAAB 9-3 2.2 TiD SE , 5 Doors, Manual, Hatchback, Diesel, 122,000 miles, Metallic blue, 2 Owners. Rear wiper, ABS, Air conditioning, Heated door mirrors, Alloy wheels, Cruise control, Folding rear seats, Immobiliser, Radio/CD, Rear headrests, Steering wheel reach adjustment, Front electric windows, Electric door mirrors, Rear electric windows, Audio remote control, Front head restraints, Front fog lights, Central locking, Passenger airbag, Remote central locking, Foglights, Drivers airbag, Trip computer, Full Service History, Alarm, Climate Control, Cloth upholstery, Headlight washers, Body coloured bumpers, Rear armrest, PAS, Child locks, Service indicator. Insurance Group: 12 ..... £3,295

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We must avoid pitfall of a double-dip recession

INSOLVENCY experts warn of a 'ticking time bomb' waiting to explode after the Christmas celebrations, ***writes Andy Rogers***.

Mark Newman and Vince Green, partners at corporate recovery firm HCW Recovery Solutions LLP, are among economy watchers fearing a double-dip recession.

This W-shaped recession graph is characterised by the economy emerging from recession with a brief upturn, only to plunge back into recession once again.

While some commentators suggest recovery will be drawn out and weak, Mr Newman said there were actually signs of inventories being restocked and production slowly picking up. Order books also appeared to be improving, but these are all worrying factors.

"After taking tough but proactive decisions to deal with the effects of the recession, businesses are looking to come out the other end," he said.

"However, any recovery will need working capital funding and that could potentially be when things really get dangerous. It is so easy to over-trade, become mesmerised as, finally, a run of new orders arrive and find that you run out of cash."

He added that while there are positive signs, it remains hard for businesses to raise working capital. Banks have been carefully managing exposure and mostly still have a reduced appetite for lending.

The value of assets – such as commercial property – has fallen, credit insurance lines have been reduced or removed, and some lenders are reluctant to lend beyond insured limits. Various Government-led initiatives have sought to help, with the business payment support service from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) particularly welcome and widely utilised.

However, HCW's Mr Green pointed out major challenges: "The quarterly rent bill has to be paid in December, just when traditional industries see a dip in profitability.

WARNING: Vince Green, left, and Mark Newman

"We could also see the unwinding of the HMRC arrears and payment schedules in the New Year. It will be interesting to see if further payment plan arrangements will be allowed.

"These deferral services have enabled many companies to continue trading, but they have also depleted HMRC's tax take, which has been far worse than expected, with more than 200,000 taxpayers entering into repayment schedules. Many companies have survived because the banks don't want to be seen calling in their debts, but unless there is a sudden and real upturn, the reality is that sooner or later the banks will act.

"If a significant number of businesses start to fail there will be a domino effect which will prolong the pain for everyone. We all know the pressures on Government funding which is needed to repair the public finances, but HMRC must still work with the banks and other stakeholders to try to mitigate the likelihood of double-dip recession."

HCW Recovery Solutions LLP was launched by Kent by accountancy and business advice firm Horwath Clark Whitehill LLP, which has eight offices across the UK – with Kent sites at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells.

Positive outlook after masterful tour of the economic horizon

BUSINESSES from across Kent and the South East gained an insight into the state of the UK economy during a business breakfast in Ashford.

Encouragingly, well over 50 per cent of attendees at Eureka Business Park's Herald Building responded by saying they were seeing the green shoots of recovery.

Chaired by Ashford MP Damian Green, the meeting also included a keynote speech from Bank of England agent Phil Eckersley (South-East and East Anglia), who covered economic developments in the UK and South East and the findings of the most recent inflation report, including analysis of money and asset prices, demand, and assessment of medium-term inflation prospects and risks.

Judith Armitt, MD of development agency Ashford's Future, said: "Mr Eckersley's tour of the economic horizon was masterful and I'm delighted we were able to give so many key businesses the inside track on the state of the economy and the prospects of an upturn.

"It was encouraging to learn how many Ashford businesses are seeing green shoots. The start of the full high-speed rail service on December 13 will give us another boost.

"Only five out of 80 companies in attendance considered they were still in recession, so this is a strong testament to Ashford's status as a sustainable business location during uncertain financial times."

HIGH HOPES: Eddie Gilbert's owner Jonny Dunhill, inset, has opened a 50-seat restaurant above his fish shop

Jonny rises to the challenge

FISHMONGER Jonny Dunhill made a virtue of supplying locally-caught fish to his Thanet customers and has now raised the stakes – with an upstairs restaurant.

He runs Eddie Gilbert's in King Street, Ramsgate, which now includes the 50-seat restaurant and a fish-and-chip shop.

It is the fulfilment of a dream for Jonny who ran a wholesale shellfish business in London for 12 years. While supplying top London establishments, Jonny admired the motivation of the talented chefs he met, many of whom are now household names.

Within six months of opening Eddie Gilbert's in 2007 – naming it after his children Edlyn and Gilbert – he scooped a prestigious Taste of Kent Award for best fish retailer and has high hopes for the new restaurant where head chef is Craig Mather, a graduate of Thanet Catering College.

Jonny is passionate about keeping things local – "we are a local business supporting local fishermen and serving local consumers" – and plans to join forces with other restaurants to promote the town as a food destination along the lines of Whitstable.

By **LIZ RULE**
Pharon Independent Financial Advisers Ltd

CHANCELLOR Alistair Darling delivers his Pre-Budget Report (PBR) on Wednesday. The PBR is one of the two economic forecasts the Treasury has to deliver to Parliament each year, the other being the annual Budget.

The PBR will update on the state of the economy and the Government's finances, and is accompanied by announcements of new tax proposals and consultation papers. Mr Darling has a fine line to tread. He desperately needs to tax us more, but fears heavy handedness might spur a double-dip recession, or delay exit from this recession.

There is speculation in the financial community that the Chancellor will use his PBR to increase the levy paid to the taxman on capital gains.

Currently, investors pay a flat rate of tax of 18 per cent on capital gains. Many clever tax specialists have therefore devised schemes for the wealthy to have their investments charged to capital gains tax at 18 per cent rather than income tax at 40 per cent.

These schemes will become even more popular, as the top rate of income tax is moving to 50 per cent. In some cases tax savings from these schemes are massive and the Chancellor is unlikely to miss such an easy target.

The most pessimistic believe he may try to align taxes on capital gains with income tax in the way it used to be, while the optimistic feel he may only increase to, say, 25 per cent. Either way there is a larger bill on its way for those who wish to sell assets that have a profit.

All individuals are allowed to make gains of £10,100 before paying capital gains tax, so many may find these changes do not impact on them at all. For others, particularly with long standing share portfolios, these changes may be significant. Taxation is not usually retrospective, so if assets are sold before the PBR then one would assume gains would be based on current rates. This cannot be guaranteed, but it is something you should consider.

Old heads and new blood are keeping these buses running

By **STEVE LOADER**
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

SOUTH East Coachworks MD Chris Bichard is a man on a mission – to save crucial skills before they are lost to Britain.

It has led him to create a traditional mix of experienced craftsmen and young apprentices at his company which, fittingly, uses a former Maidstone & District bus company site in Faversham to renovate and convert old buses and coaches.

This successful blend of 'old heads' and 'new blood' enabled the coachworks to drive off with the Training and Staff Development prize in the KOS Media £1 Million Business Challenge Awards, worth nearly £100,000 in advertising and promotion for the firm.

He has long been concerned about the UK's lost skills and apprenticeships and, pointing to one of the grand old double-decker buses currently being transformed, said: "Like so many things it's fairly simple to run, but we don't tend to have that simple skill set any more.

"There is a generation gap that we need to fill, but the kids are very receptive and, more importantly, our skilled men are willing to teach.

"Often you find it difficult to find a skilled man, particularly in troubled times, to put his job on the line to train a young kid who ultimately is going to have his job, but fortunately we have a different mindset here."

ON BOARD: Chris Bichard, left, is congratulated by Tom Legg of Marriott Tudor Park Hotel at the KOS Media Business Awards

He has also focused on developing skills in-house rather than leaving the job to colleges or further education courses: "Because they can come in and not learn just one skill," he explained.

"The carpenter could also be doing some upholstery work, he may also be doing electrical or bodywork. There are so many opportunities for the kids.

"Plus, when you're young, you don't always know what you want to do. So we can say, try carpentry, and if they find they're not very good at that then they can have a chance at trying coachbuilding perhaps."

Mr Bichard bought the remnants of the then failed Preston Street Coachworks six years ago and has concentrated on bus refurbishment, but also offering many different designs – everything from a bathroom showroom to community buses and from band touring buses to even creating a gentlemen's club.

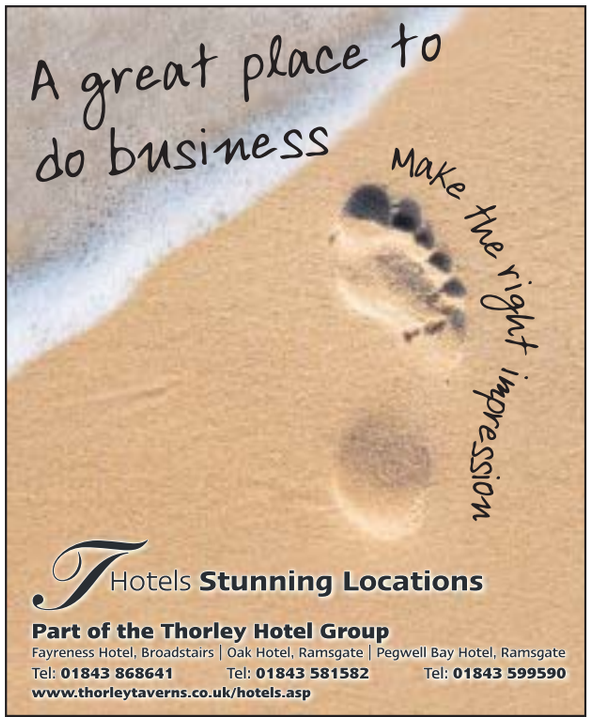
"Every day is different," he said. "We welcome the challenges when they come in, and I don't think we've shied away from one yet.

"We've inserted a four-passenger lift into a double-decker so they could get to the upper deck to watch a film in a cinema; we've even converted a [former London] Routemaster so it had a roof which went up and down.

"You have to be careful you don't upset the traditionalists when you renovate some of these buses. We always try and keep them as traditional, but as corporate as we possibly can."

To view this, search 'coach' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

Award-winning South East Coachworks is profiled in this video about its success



Locally sourced means little without 'seasonality' revival

By **PAT CRAWFORD**

FOOD retailers from the large multiples to farmers' markets are all benefiting from increased demand for regionally produced food.

This is obviously good news for Kent's farmers and growers, but there is a stumbling block.

We have lost 'seasonality'. It went out when the global market came in and, for the last 20 years or so, we have been used to having exactly what we want, whenever we want it.

So younger cooks have no idea what seasonality really involves.

Without a return to produce that can be grown here during the winter, we cannot achieve the optimum environmental and economic benefits from buying regional food.

Celebrity chefs such as Jamie Oliver and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall continually advocate 'fresh' and 'locally-sourced' ingredients, but we're used to green beans and strawberries in December and asparagus all-year-round and the phrase 'out-of-season' has little or no meaning.

This has to change, so Hadlow College is setting up a Seasonal Awareness Campaign (SAC) aligning with the college's involvement in local produce. It has already partnered with Kent County Council in the Produced in Kent marketing body for county food and drink.

The college's director of finance and resources, Mark Lumsdon-Taylor, also designed a new fresh produce strategy and Produced in Kent has made big strides since its founding in July, 2008.

Hadlow knows the sharp end of localising food retailing too, through the Broadview farm shop, on the main campus just outside Hadlow village, and after recently taking over an established farm shop in Tonbridge Road.

There are plans to expand the latter into one of the largest of its type in Kent and the college is planning a third enterprise.

The college's Broadview tearoom – holder of the South East Region Rural Enterprise Award for excellence – also promotes SAC through soups, quiches, pies and other dishes using regionally sourced seasonal ingredients and manageress Karen Thomas is happy to give customers copies of her recipes.

Mr Lumsdon-Taylor said Hadlow's successful business arm is regarded as a model for similar institutions and bodies: "First, initiatives such as the farm shops are a clear and focused demonstration of our understanding of, and active engagement with, the rural sector.

"Second, commercial activities are an enormously important source of revenue because we plough all profits back into the college."

Heed the danger signs of tougher work safety laws

THREE Kent boroughs are among the most dangerous places to work in the South East, according to statistics from the Health and Safety Executive, ***writes Andy Rogers***.

But employers now face vastly increased fines and even imprisonment for failing to take due care of workers' safety.

Major injuries across the region are actually down three per cent, but this is some way behind a national fall of nine per cent. Poor results in Medway, Swale and Dover contributed to the anomaly.

But Tunbridge Wells and Greenhithe-based law firm Thomson Snell and Passmores (TSP) says tough new legislation will pressurise employers to counter the damning statistics.

HSE figures show most work-related deaths and serious injuries arise from construction and agriculture, but extraction/mining, utility supply, transport, storage and communications also have higher than average accident rates. According to TSP, which has specialist teams for employer negligence and other business and corporate issues, the average fine after conviction for health and safety offences has been about £13,000 per offence and slightly lower than the 2006 and 2007 averages.

However, it warned that the Health and Safety (Offences) Act 2008 – made law on January 16, 2009 – and new sentencing guidelines for corporate manslaughter and workplace fatalities will soon impact heavily on that average. The Act boosted magistrates' power to fine for more minor health and safety offences from £5,000 to £20,000; more serious offences resulting in a fatality suggest a penalty seldom less than £100,000 and possibly running to hundreds of thousands.

And the new guidelines suggest that for corporate manslaughter, the starting point will usually be £500,000 and may run to millions.

Directors, managers and employees found guilty of breaching health and safety legislation could also face imprisonment.

TSP's advice to employers is:

• Review and update health and safety policy and workplace practices and procedures.

• Conduct risk assessments – crucial to informing what reasonably practical steps an employer must take in order to discharge its health and safety duties.

• Assess the health and safety arrangements of contractors and key partners.

• Check insurance cover. Legal costs in defending HSE prosecutions can be substantial. An organisation cannot insure against a fine imposed under health and safety legislation, but some insurers do cover for the prosecution costs a defendant will be ordered to pay in the event of a conviction or guilty plea.

Check also whether senior managers and directors are covered by the company policy if they are personally prosecuted. TSP also recommends obtaining legal advice on internal incident/accident investigation procedures and if asked to an interview under caution to which they may be invited by prosecutors.

MORTGAGE RATES

RT: Rate type **R%:** Rate percentage **L:** Loan **U:** Until
OD: Other details

FIXED

WOOLWICH
RT: FIXED **R%:** 3.79% **L:** 70% **U:** 31/01/2012
OD: £1,329

L&G FIRST ACTIVE
RT: FIXED **R%:** 3.79% **L:** 70% **U:** 31/01/2012
OD: £1,029

MORTGAGE BOX
RT: FIXED **R%:** 4.19% **L:** 70% **U:** 31/12/2011
OD: £1,529

ABBEY
RT: FIXED **R%:** 3.99% **L:** 70% **U:** 02/03/2012
OD: £1,030

OTHER

NORTHERN ROCK
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 2.79% **L:** 70% **U:** 01/03/2012
OD: £1,030

ABBEY
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 2.69% **L:** 70% **U:** 2 YEARS
OD: £1,030

COVENTRY
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 2.59% **L:** 70% **U:** 31/12/2011
OD: £1,034

ALLIANCE & LEICESTER
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 1.99% **L:** 70% **U:** 2 YEARS
OD: £2,030

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OPEN MARKET ANNUITY RATES FOR MATURING PENSION FUNDS – PER £10,000

* ASSUME 50% INCOME FOR SPOUSE OF SAME AGE ON ANNUITANTS DEATH, PAYABLE MONTHLY IN ADVANCE WITHOUT ESCALATION, RATE IS PER £10,000 OF FUND MATURED AND ASSUME THE CLIENT IS IN GOOD HEALTH

MALE AGED 60		FEMALE AGED 60	
CANADA LIFE	£547	CANADA LIFE	£534
LEGAL & GENERAL	£533	AVIVA	£531
AVIVA	£524	LEGAL & GENERAL	£522
AEGON SE	£524	STANDARD LIFE	£509
PRUDENTIAL	£520	PRUDENTIAL	£509

MALE AGED 65		FEMALE AGED 65	
CANADA LIFE	£604	CANADA LIFE	£586
LEGAL & GENERAL	£591	AVIVA	£575
PRUDENTIAL	£583	LEGAL & GENERAL	£569
AVIVA	£578	PRUDENTIAL	£564
AEGON SE	£577	STANDARD LIFE	£557

• THESE RATES CANNOT BE GUARANTEED AND ARE CORRECT AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS

Haulier really on a roll after fleet upgrade

HAULIER EH Nicholls has taken delivery of five new Iveco Stralis tractor units to operate a contract won by fellow county-based truck operation, Alan Firmin.

The two family-owned firms will distribute plasterboard from Knauf's manufacturing plant in Sittingbourne, where EH Nicholls also has its headquarters. Firmin trucks operate out of Snodland.

The new vehicles were supplied for an undisclosed sum by Maidstone's Haynes Trucks and are in Knauf's distinctive blue livery.

They join a further five Stralis units delivered in early 2009 along with 25 new trailers, operating in EH Nicholls' traditional red livery, and take the company's fleet to 46 tractor units and 125 trailers.

Company MD Paul Nicholls said: "It's a tough climate for everyone in road transport right now, but we're continuing to modernise our fleet."

Capital show for Bramley's 200th

FOURAYES Farm in Bicknor celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Bramley apple in style by sending a float to the Lord Mayor's Show in London.

Ten members of the fruit-producing team plus friends and family braved wind and rain on the day. They also joined forces with the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers, Hadlow College – where students built the float – and English Apples and Pears.

ON PARADE: Fourayes staff with the Bramley apple float in London

The float told the story of how the Bramley travelled from tree to table, ending up in an apple pie. The structure included a model apple weighing more than a quarter of a tonne and a tree taller than a double-decker bus.

Joining the celebrations was Celia Steven, a descendant of Henry Merryweather who saw the commercial potential of the Bramley apple and introduced it to the market in 1865. The original tree seed was planted in 1809.

Fourayes MD Phil Acock said: We couldn't help wondering what Henry and, of course, Matthew Bramley [who gave his name to the fruit] would have made of the success of the apple over the years. It has grown to become the nation's favourite cooking apple and is widely regarded as the finest apple for cooking, not just in UK, but across the world."

Fourayes is a third-generation family business and now the only remaining English-owned apple processor and supplier, as well as the largest in the UK.

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Check – before disaster strikes

NEWS footage of people driven from their homes by flooding also underlines the risk to businesses from our climate and other disasters, ***writes Andy Rogers***.

Kent-based broker Belmont International said it highlights how directors, managers and proprietors must take more care and advice to guard against such catastrophes.

But many businesses not only don't believe disasters like those in Cumbria will hit them, but pay surprisingly little attention to the insurance package they take out against them, according to Barrie Etchells, the Sevenoaks firm's MD.

So, when disaster strikes, they may face a further hammer blow.

"It is becoming increasingly common for insurers to stick to the letter of their contracts of insurance – or to their interpretation," he warned. "Help your advisers and insurers understand your business risks, what your budget is and what financial resources you may have to call upon.

"Many difficulties between businesses and their insurers arise from a lack of understanding and poor communication. An insurance policy is a legally binding contract between your business and your insurer."

He said businesses must ask themselves: "When did you last read your policy or have the content and meaning explained to you?"

He also warned against policy buying purely on price: "Raising prices in a highly competitive global marketplace is difficult, which means there is often a deal to be done and insurance premiums are no different.

SINKING FEELING: But don't let your firm become an insurance statistic, say experts

KNOW THE RISKS: Barrie Etchells

"However, businesses need to curb the urge to simply buy on price. With insurance it's a fine balance between cover and cost. If it looks too good to be true, it often is.

"Insurance firms are tightening up on their claims payments to protect their own cashflow and profits. However, if a business has a good claims history and all the necessary measures in place to reduce the risk of an incident, then it's still possible to find competitive premiums.

"For those firms without a positive claims history, there are ways to improve the situation. Get your broker to provide risk management advice and identify where problems might arise and stop them being a threat.

"Eighty per cent of small firms that have an uninsured incident costing more than £100,000 don't survive more than two years.

"Know the risks, understand the cover and avoid that sick feeling in the pit of your stomach when you discover you're inadequately covered."

CURRYS and PC World manager at Crayford, Mike Gee, has been shortlisted for Store Manager of the Year at the Oracle Retail Week Awards 2010.

Early next year, along with seven other finalists, he faces a Dragons' Den-style panel comprising senior UK retail figures. Mr Gee already has his group's Managers' Manager of the Year Award and the Chairman's Shield on his CV.

Retail Week editor Tim Danaher said: "The managers nominated for this award have demonstrated a real understanding of consumer needs, as well as dedicating time and resources to ensure staff deliver great customer service and achieve their own career aspirations."

The awards take place on March 4 at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London.

KENT and London-based employment law firm Loch Associates has added to its strength.

Adam Haines joins from Cripps Harries Hall, bringing broad experience in contentious and non-contentious employment law matters, assisting in employee disputes, employment policies and redundancy. Before qualifying as a lawyer, Mr Haines studied law and business at Keele University. Loch Associates was founded in 2007 by Pam Loch.

GADGET advice company www.gadgethelpline.com reckons poor spelling and typing on the internet could be costing hard-hit UK companies dear. It was forced to register incorrect spellings of its brand domain after 28 per cent of the 18-21 age group struggled to spell gadget, in contrast with only three per cent of the 30-50s.

Site founder Crispin Thomas registered three variations of the site domain a fortnight ago and has already seen traffic rise by 5.21per cent.

He said: "Although search engines do have a default alert which asks users if they meant to spell a word in a particular way, we were finding a huge drop-off among younger users, which we calculated could impact on our business annually to the tune of £150,000."

He added that even when mistyping is taken into account, poor spelling may be costing the online economy millions.

DESPITE the financial woes of Gulf state Dubai, British firms are being called upon to find out how they can develop Middle East exports.

They can attend Partner ME in February, a series of regional events starting in London and hosted by the Government's UK Trade and Investment Department.

Trade Minister Lord Davies said: "Markets across the Gulf are continuing to liberalise and diversify their economies, opening up investment opportunities. With the exchange rate favourable to exporters, now is a prime time for British companies to explore new markets."

The event lists the following target markets: UAE, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq, Qatar, Lebanon, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Jordan, Egypt and Palestine.

Dubai is conspicuously absent.

BRITONS are more casual in the office, according to an email survey of 1,700 respondents by Charles Tyrwhitt Shirts. Five years ago 71 per cent of workers 'always dressed smart' in the workplace, but this has slumped to 53 per cent; 52 per cent used to 'always wear a tie' to work instead of 68 per cent; and only 38 per cent now wear a suit to work against 56 per cent. And dress-down Friday is now big in the UK, with 72 per cent of British workers dressing more casually on Fridays.

Small could be beautiful for recession-hit UK PLC

By **ANDY ROGERS**
business@kosmedia.co.uk

SMALL businesses are playing a major part in overcoming the recession but need more help from Government and the banks, according to a new research.

The Voice of Small Business annual survey 2009 comes from the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) – which has some 6,500 Kent members – and paints an upbeat picture of smaller operators in the UK economy.

But they could use more help says FSB chairman for Kent and Medway Roger House, who added: "With half [48 per cent] of businesses expecting to expand their client base and one in five [19 per cent] intending to employ more staff in the coming year, this is no time to pull the support for this vibrant sector, which is at the heart of economic growth.

"As the UK goes to the polls next year, public debt and unemployment will still be high, and the Government will have to make tough decisions to encourage recovery. Small businesses will clearly be at the heart of that recovery and must be given all the support they need to get on with the job of growing the economy out of recession.

"The FSB is calling for a renewed economic stimulus to help small businesses continue to create jobs, get access to crucial finance, innovate and start new businesses, to get us squarely on the road to recovery."

The FSB says more than 80 per cent of new jobs were created by small businesses in the five years to 2007 and its survey reveals that 27 per cent of the 10,000 respondents reported higher profitability over the last year; 30 per cent said sales volumes rose, too.

But banks came in for a broadside; 32 per cent of respondents borrowing finance over the past year reported that they had been charged more, with most saying their rates increased by more than one per cent.

Half of respondents did not take out any loans at all and the FSB suggests this may show they were put off by the prohibitive borrowing costs. Thirty-one per cent of those surveyed said more and fairer bank lending would boost their business prospects.

But the FSB says UK banking does not provide the channels for finance that small businesses need and called on the Government to create a package to nurture the sector's tentative recovery. Ministers could also help, say 31 per cent of respondents, by cutting employers' National Insurance for smaller firms.

Election manifesto writers might also note how respondents could use tax cuts for their sector: 42 per cent would employ more staff, 35 per cent would pump more investment into the business, 32 per cent would spend more on marketing, 28 per cent would boost wages and 23 per cent would create new services and products.

Winning team made quite an impression

ALL SMILES: The Reeves and Neylan team collect their award from impressionist Rory Bremner (left), along with the firm's client guests

REEVES and Neylan LLP scooped the prestigious national award for Best Large Firm of the Year at the Accountancy Age Awards 2009.

The firm, which has 25 partners and 230 staff in offices at Canterbury, Chatham Maritime, London Bridge and Gatwick, fought off strong opposition after judges were impressed by its responsive and client-focused skills at national and international level.

One client said: "Reeves and Neylan provides the personal service of a small local business but has the resources and skills of a large firm."

This award follows earlier national recognition for Reeves and Neylan, which twice won Best Tax Team in the UK at the LexisNexis Taxation Awards. Clive Stevens, Reeves and Neylan's managing partner, said: "Our awards success shows that it is not necessary to go to a 'Big Four' accounting firm to obtain first-class technical advice, with outstanding client service and delivery."

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Timeline

KOS Media sport takes a look at the highlights of all the sporting action from the last 100 years

Thousands pack ground for Darts and Fleet derby

1909

100 YEARS AGO: THE game of the day in the county was the derby between Dartford and Northfleet United, which drew a crowd of 3,000 to Dartford's ground.

Despite being at full strength, Northfleet were off colour, possibly a result of their FA Cup replay defeat at Croydon Common a week beforehand.

Kennard gave the Darts a deserved lead, but the Cementers came back hard in the second period and Myers set up Jecock for the equaliser.

Dartford finished with just nine-and-a-half men, Hawkins limping off and the injured Elliott a virtual passenger.

Kent's rugby side beat Middlesex by three tries to one, Stringer, Howard and Stokes all touching down.

Bones of contention over Charnley's world title loss

1959

50 YEARS AGO: BOXING fans across Kent were left crestfallen after Dave Charnley was unluckily beaten by Joe 'Old Bones' Brown in a world lightweight championship bout in Houston, Texas.

Charnley, from Dartford, was beaten in the fifth round after the referee stopped the fight, with Charnley having taken a cut above the eye.

Fans, including Charnley's parents from Attlee Drive, Dartford, attempted to listen to radio commentary of the fight via an American station, but that too proved a disappointment due to an erratic reception.

Up until the cut Charnley had been fighting well and his fans believe had he lasted the distance he would have had every chance of winning.

Angels v Fisher cup clash is marred by dart attack

1984

25 YEARS AGO: A VISIT from Fisher Athletic in the early 1980s was usually about as pleasant an experience as going to the dentist and finding Sir Larry Olivier was about to play havoc with your root canal.

So it proved for Tonbridge Angels when they staged a Bill Dellow Cup tie at Longmead.

Fisher were reported to the Southern League after Angels keeper Paul Hubbard was hit by a dart, allegedly thrown by a visiting supporter.

The news came just days after Fisher's fans attacked referee Peter Pittaway during a league game with Gravesend & Northfleet at their Surrey Docks Stadium.

In cricket, Kent's concerns were altogether more mundane. Returning overseas star Eldine Baptiste needed somewhere to live, preferably in the Dover area. Anyone who could help was asked to contact manager Brian Luckhurst.

If you have any fascinating stories from years gone by, email them to our sports editor at **glenn.pearson@kosmedia.co.uk**

Brickies in crisis

Sittingbourne may fold if fans don't come, warns secretary

By **FRED ATKINS**

ONE of Kent's oldest senior football clubs faces extinction by the end of the season unless gates improve drastically, or a new financial backer is found.

Sittingbourne FC have been playing since 1886, but the club's financial situation is so acute that secretary John Pitts says they may be forced to fold.

"We've got a town with a population of 60,000 and we can't even get 150 through the gate," Pitts told Kent on Sunday.

Despite success on the field in the past two seasons under manager Gary Abbott, average attendances at Bourne Park have dropped from around the 250 mark two years ago to 120.

The club have announced free entry for next Saturday's home game with Fleet Town in a bid to drum up support, but Pitts fears the measure may be too little too late, citing Bourne Park's poor location and the attraction of rival clubs.

"People have allegiances, to Charlton, Millwall, Gillingham and the Premier League clubs and are quite happy to spend £60 taking their family to a game, but a lot of them don't even know there is a senior football club in the town," he said.

Pictures: IGOR KUPCO

EMPTY SEATS: The home crowds at Bourne Park have fallen to around an average of 120

"I can remember Sittingbourne at the old Bull Ground and people would come there after they'd done their shopping on a Saturday afternoon, but that's never going to happen at Bourne Park."

Unless the Brickies can persuade people to swap the 80-mile round trip to London for the three-mile round trip from the town centre to Bourne Park in substantial numbers, the club's resources will be stretched to breaking point.

"Caerns Sports (the site's owners) have been pretty good to us, but we're paying too much in rent, the electricity bill is £1,000 per month and then we've got to find the money to pay the players," Pitts said.

In the past selling a player like Neil Emblen or Lee Harper for a six-figure sum would keep the club afloat, but this is no longer an option.

The club can no longer afford to give players contracts, meaning when a talent is unearthed a professional club can pick him up for free, as Dagenham & Redbridge did with Femi Omogbehin earlier this season.

Pitts believes only council intervention, or a Swale Abramovich, can rescue the club and feels the latter is more likely than the former.

Dropping into the Kent County League and reforming, like Canterbury and Maidstone, is the only other option.

"We're talking about it now, but I don't think any of us wants to do that," Pitts said. "I'm not saying other people wouldn't want to take it on, but the present incumbents have had enough."

Harper win away from Old Trafford in cup

FORMER Sittingbourne goalkeeper Lee Harper is a replay away from leading his Kettering Town side to Old Trafford in the third round of the FA Cup.

New Kettering player-manager Harper (pictured) began his career with Eltham, before joining the Brickies in 1993, reportedly after impressing in a Kent Senior Trophy tie against them and was sold to Arsenal a season later for £150,000.

Harper was the Gunners' third-choice keeper behind David Seaman and the future Gillingham stopper Vince Bartram, but kept a clean sheet on his only appearance for the first-team, a 2-0 win at Southampton in 1997, before moving to QPR, Walsall and later Northampton.

Harper was named Kettering's manager in November after Mark Cooper left to replace Darren Ferguson at Peterborough.

Now 38, he defied a long-term injury to produce a series of superb saves against Leeds United last Sunday, earning the Conference side a 1-1 draw, a replay at Elland Road on Tuesday night and a possible tie at Manchester United.

"I thought about hanging up my boots because I have a back problem, but I'll be walking out on crutches to be there for this replay," he said, after defying the League One side's strike force for 77 minutes, until Jermaine Beckford's equaliser. "I'll have injections or anything to make sure I can face the replay."

Dalers face punishment over walk-off

KENT League side Holmesdale face a points deduction and fine after the club's players walked off the pitch before last Saturday's home game with Deal Town, forcing the game to be postponed.

The Bromley-based club will now be charged with failing to fulfil a fixture without just cause.

If found guilty the league has the right to expel them from the competition, though league secretary Roy Vinter said: "That won't happen."

However, the club could be docked three points, fined and forced to pay Deal's travel expenses.

Holmesdale issued an apology for the postponement, blaming "last-minute player withdrawals" and describing the situation as "unacceptable".

Picture: TONY GRAY

POSTPONEMENT: Holmesdale (yellow and green) pictured against Faversham Town this season, face a points deduction and fine

They say they are committed to fulfilling their fixtures for the rest of the season, but their reserve game with Erith & Belvedere on Monday night was also postponed.

Holmesdale confirmed manager Billy Hughes had resigned, but swiftly appointed Gary Davies as his replacement, with Tony Fanning assisting him.

"We are confident these appointments will bring stability to the football club during this difficult time and ultimately long-term success," a statement said.

An earlier statement said the players' actions were "totally against the ethics of the club" but declined to elaborate further.

League secretary Vinter said Deal had asked to be awarded the points, though this request is unlikely to be granted.

He said the league was still awaiting an explanation from Holmesdale. "All I know is that the players refused to play," he said. "The mind boggles as to what the reason could be."

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Is it the end of the road for team of champions?

Pictures: NICK DUNGAN

WINNER: Leon Camier broke the record for the most wins in a British Superbike season with GSE Racing

The future looks bleak for GSE Racing after sponsor pulls plug

By TOM HOWARD

AFTER 10 years of competing at the top of the British Superbike Championship, Kent's GSE Racing team is on the verge of dropping out of the sport.

The superbike team, formed by Kent businessman Darrell Healey, has become the British championship's most successful team with five titles.

However, with main sponsor Airwaves ending its five-year deal with the team last season, GSE Racing are on the brink of extinction as they struggle to find funds to enter the 2010 championship.

Since their formation in 1998, the Ashford-based team have helped produce a number of successful riders, including three-time world champion Troy Bayliss, Leon Haslam, Gregorio Lavilla, Sheppey's Shane Byrne and Ashford's Leon Camier.

Team principal Healey admitted he fears his team has featured in its last race unless a new sponsor is found before the end of the month.

That after GSE Racing experienced its most successful season to date this year after winning 23 of the 26 races, with Camier taking the overall title.

Healey said: "It's a massive shame for the entire team if we cannot continue. It has been hard telling all of our staff that they may not have a job next year, but at the moment things are not looking great.

"We have had interest from two or three sponsors and had an offer, but the company withdrew the bid.

"We've had a great time in the British championship and we couldn't really have done anymore. We have won titles with Ducati and Yamaha bikes so if we do end, we will finish on a high."

If the team does fail to find a sponsor in time, Healey said GSE Racing would continue its involvement in superbike racing by sponsoring Camier, as he steps up to the World Superbike Championship next year.

He said: "We've been associated with Leon since 2001 when he was racing 125cc bikes and it was great to have him back in the team for the last two years. If we can't run a team next year, we'll help Leon and maybe Shane Byrne. If we can help them out that would be great."

Wrotham-based British Touring Car team, Motorbase Performance, are also affected by Airwaves' decision to pull the plug on sponsorship.

The team signed a one-year contract with the Wrigley's firm last season and also find themselves searching for a new main sponsor for 2010. However, team owner David Bartrum is adamant his team will still be on the grid next season.

He said: "It's a shame to lose the Airwaves sponsorship as they have been great partners and certainly helped raise awareness of the team. It is going to be tough to find a new sponsor, but it will not stop us racing next year."

ON TRACK: Motorbase say they will line up for the new British Touring Championship season despite Airwave's decision

Pictures: HELEN COOPER

BIG STAGE: Courtney Tulloch will be looking to reproduce his best form at World School Games in Qatar

Teenagers take on rest of world

TWO of the county's future stars pit themselves against the world's finest young gymnasts this week as they travel to Qatar for the World School Games.

Courtney Tulloch, of Maidstone's Pegasus Gymnastics Club, and Keziah Gore, from the City of Canterbury Club, were selected with 12 others to represent England in the Middle East.

Tulloch, 14, will compete in the men's artistic competition having won gold on the rings at the British Championships. Southport's Frank Baines, who pipped him to the overall title, is also included in the English team.

Meanwhile, 14-year-old Gore is one of four English girls taking part in the women's rhythmic competition, following her individual silver medal for Great Britain at the Australian Youth Olympic Festival earlier this year.

BEATEN: Barry Hawkins lost out in the final round of qualifying for the UK Championships in Wales last week

Hawk's UK title hopes smashed

BARRY Hawkins' hopes of finishing the year on a high at snooker's UK Championships were dashed with defeat in the final round of qualifying.

The 30-year-old needed to win one match at the event in Prestatyn, north Wales, to reach the main tournament, which began in Telford yesterday.

The world number 17 was the highest ranked player at the qualifiers, but he struggled to find his best form and lost 9-5 to Tom Ford.

The result sees Hawkins miss out on the UK Championships, the second biggest prize in the sport, for the first time since 2002. It means he will slip down the provisional rankings and makes his task of reaching the all-important top 16 by the end of the season more difficult.

The next opportunity to pick up ranking points is in January, when Hawkins needs to win one qualifying match to reach the Welsh Open.

PICKED: Mike Skinner will run for GB in the European Cross Country Championship

Skinner qualifies for GB's European team

MIKE Skinner insists the job is only half done after winning his first ever cross-country trial and earning a call-up to Great Britain's European team.

The 30-year-old, who helped Great Britain to a bronze medal at the European Cross Country Championship last year, caught the team selectors' attention last weekend by winning the trial at Liverpool.

The Blackheath & Bromley athlete won by a second from Moumin Geele and will join a six-man team, headed by Mo Farah, at next Sunday's European Championships in Dublin.

Skinner finished 20th overall at last year's event, but believes he is in much better form 12 months on and feels Great Britain have a realistic title shot.

He said: "The race went to plan. I managed to stay with the lead group and had enough in the tank to come through and win. I've never won a trial event so it was very pleasing once I crossed the line, but the job is only half done.

"Obviously it is great to be in the team, but I will be disappointed if I don't achieve a finish in the top-30 in Dublin. With Mo Farah leading the team, we have an excellent chance of doing well at the championships."

Fellow Blackheath & Bromley athlete Scott Overall missed out on a place in the Great Britain team after crossing the finish line in eighth place.

However, Kent will also be represented in Dublin by Medway & Maidstone's Natalie Gray, who earned a place in the women's under-23 team. She finished 12th overall and fourth in class in the women's senior race.

The 21-year-old's inclusion in the team is her greatest achievement in the sport to date after winning last year's senior Kent Cross Country Championship.

In his first big interview since taking over as acting chief executive at Kent, Jamie Clifford talks to GLENN PEARSON about his plans for leading the cricket club into a new era

'I know what Kent cricket stands for'

READY: Jamie Clifford is under no illusions as to how tough life will be in the hot seat

THERE'S no doubt events in the next few months are going to shape the futures of both Jamie Clifford and Kent County Cricket Club.

The 33-year-old stepped into the office vacated by outgoing chief executive Paul Millman last week, as he sets about proving to the club's committee and members that he has the credentials to navigate the county through what are likely to be testing times.

The £8.2 million redevelopment of the St Lawrence Ground, a new membership scheme, managing and overturning club deficits that ran to £706,536 in the last financial year, are all top of the 'to do' list, and that's before player recruitment begins to ensure Kent stay in Division One of the County Championship next summer.

Millman's exit last week will have come as a shock to many, but, whether it's welcomed initially or not, there's going to be a degree of change at St Lawrence, even if the county choose to recruit a full-time chief executive from outside.

Club chairman George Kennedy gave a brief glimpse of the future when he highlighted the required attributes of the new man.

"I want leadership of the cricket club, I want someone that is financially astute and understands business," he said. "Cricket hardly makes money at all except at Test level, so we need someone that doesn't only understand the economy of cricket, but understands how to run a business 365 days a year."

Having been at the club since 2002, Clifford, who was brought up in Broadstairs, has the advantage of knowing the club inside out – something he was keen to stress.

"I had the advantage of already being here, I know how it works, but there is a lot to do," he said. "The idea we shut down in the winter and re-emerge in the summer is just a myth. We work very hard in the winter on a lot of fronts.

"We just re-launched the membership scheme, the ground redevelopment project is now full-steam ahead, we need to get our squad sorted for next summer, as well as concentrating on the day to day business of running an organisation."

It's doubtful many would refer to the cricket club as an "organisation" but the need to make money throughout the course of the year, and not just the cricketing months, is undeniably crucial for the long-term future of the county.

Central to that, the club say, is the ground redevelopment. The £4 million loan from Canterbury Council will help get that finally off the ground and is something Clifford has been involved with from the start.

'I had the advantage of already being here – I know how it works – but there's a lot to do'

"I have been involved with the ground redevelopment project since 2004 and really, Paul and I worked on that together from the early stages, through to planning and taking it to members for approval," he said.

"The person in the background doing quite a lot of the leg work was me. It was a big project for the club so Paul was fronting it, but it's a project I know very well."

Speaking to Clifford, who now lives in Wye, it's plainly evident that running operations at Kent is not something he sees as a temporary measure.

The club are hoping to make a full-time announcement by March – the same month the county's financial results are due – during which time the acting chief executive will have had more than three months to prove he is the man for the job. And while some sceptics may see the appointment as a definite shift away from the 'good old days of the 1970s' and a ploy to make Kent more business-like, Clifford insists his role is to ensure there's a natural balance.

"That idea of 'here comes someone that is trying to radically change things' is wrong – I do understand the history and traditions and what makes Kent cricket so special," he said. "It's a big part of what I believe in.

"For me it's not just a job, and while I know this is a cliché, it's more important than that. I understand what Kent cricket is and what it stands for.

"If people ask me 'is it daunting taking on the job?' well, to an extent it is, but it's more about the responsibility of the organisation that I have grown up loving. A lot of people believe in Kent cricket and that's resting on my shoulders – that's the bit that's daunting."

One area that will be scrutinised over the coming months is how well the club communicates with its members and supporters. Criticism has been levelled at the club in the past for a lack of information coming out of St Lawrence, and while there have been valid reasons, particularly in regards to legal issues with the redevelopment and players' contracts, Clifford did say he wants to make Kent more "open".

"I'm under no illusions that we are a very visible organisation and we have a responsibility to inform where possible, but it's difficult because you can't always tell people all things that are going on behind the scenes," he said. "We are committed to communicate as effectively as we can."

Supporters split over changes to membership

CHANGES to Kent's membership packages ahead of the 2010 season have polarised opinion among supporters.

For the most comprehensive package – member, friend and car – supporters will now have to shell out £400, a 68 per cent rise on last year, although the new deal does include entrance to all eight home games in the Twenty20 Cup.

The club's new 'Friends of Kent Cricket' scheme allows members to build their own package but the benefits of full membership are not available unless all the add-ons are purchased, however, and even for those supporters who pay the full £400 there is no 'country membership', which previously allowed Kent supporters entry to other county grounds.

Acting chief executive Jamie Clifford said: "The gate prices have gone up and that means they have gone up across all areas accordingly and that's a reflection of where we are priced against other sporting attractions and entertainment, so we have aligned our prices with those competing attractions. We have total confidence that what we offer is as good as it gets."

Kirk to show who's the daddy at Ally Pally

KIRK Shepherd is targeting a run to the semi-finals at this year's PDC World Darts Championships having rediscovered his best form in recent weeks, ***writes Steve Tervet.***

The Ramsgate-born player, known on the oche as the Martial Dartist, was catapulted into the spotlight at the tournament two years ago when he pulled off a string of upsets to reach the final before losing 7-2 to John Part.

Shepherd, ranked 29th, reached the knockout stages at the Grand Slam of Darts in Wolverhampton a fortnight ago after recovering from a 5-0 defeat to Mervyn King to record group C wins over Steve Maish and Darryl Fitton.

He then reached the third round of the German Darts Championship in Halle before losing to King once again, although the run did net him £1,000.

With the action at the Alexandra Palace starting on Friday, December 18, Shepherd has a fortnight of practice ahead of him, punctuated by the attentions of his son Callum, born earlier this year.

He said: "Over the last two months I've been playing really well, I'm hitting form at just the right time. I'd like to think I can reach the quarter or semi-finals.

"I do put that bit of extra preparation in because it's such a prestigious championship.

"Having a son has affected the time I've got to practice, but I'm still entering as many tournaments as before – my preparations haven't changed in that sense."

TARGET: Kirk Shepherd is aiming for PDC World semi-finals

Away-day blues

There is no escaping the fact that Gills' form on road is pitiful this season, says DAVID PRITCHARD

DESPITE the problems surrounding Gillingham's trip to Leyton Orient on Tuesday (see column), the result will not have come as much of a surprise to anyone connected with the club.

The 3-1 defeat was the Gills' seventh successive away loss in League One. Their overall record on the road this season makes ugly reading: P10 W0 D1 L9 – the joint worst in English football's top six tiers.

It is the form of a side heading towards relegation, but the Gills have stayed out of trouble thanks to an excellent record at home. Manager Mark Stimson is desperate to end the sequence before his side hit the inevitable blip at Priestfield.

"You can't rely on your home form every single week and we've just got to try even harder now, if we can, away from home," he said. "It might come down to a change of personnel for certain games and try something different, because what we've tried hasn't worked."

Terrible

The problem for Gillingham fans is the contrast between watching a side terrific at home and terrible away is nothing new. While the season so far is unusually bad, the club have struggled on their travels for years (see table).

Home advantage means clubs typically win more than half their points in front of their own fans. The figures for the 2000/01-2003/04 seasons broadly bear this out, with the team collecting an average of just under 40 per cent of their points away from home.

But since the 2004/05 campaign, when the Gills dropped out of the Championship, it has been a markedly different story. With the obvious exception of last season, when the club were in League Two, the figures make depressing reading.

Successive managers with different sets of players have grappled with the problem, apparently with limited success. One argument is, instead of under-achieving away from home, the club are kept in a higher division because they over-achieve at Priestfield – the only constant over the period.

Andy Hessenthaler spent a decade at the club from 1996 as both a player and manager and agrees Priestfield has an extra edge which is difficult to quantify.

GILLS' AWAY FORM 2000-2009

SEASON	OVERALL POINTS	AWAY POINTS	SEASON'S PERCENTAGE	AWAY WINS
2009/10	21	1	4.8%	0
2008/09	75	32	42.7%	9
2007/08	46	10	21.7%	2
2006/07	59	15	25.4%	3
2005/06	60	17	28.3%	3
2004/05	50	14	28%	2
2003/04	51	20	39.2%	4
2002/03	62	26	41.9%	6
2001/02	64	23	35.9%	6
2000/01	55	22	40%	4

He said: "Traditionally it's been very much like that over the years. During my time at the club I think we relied a lot on our home form, Priestfield was a fortress for us, but away from home we found it hard.

"It's a very tight ground, with fans on top of each other and the atmosphere's good. It might be right because over the years we did so well at home but away for some reason we didn't, it's very difficult to know what the problem is."

Alan Liptrott, co-editor of fansite gillsconnect.com, believes Priestfield has something about it which can intimidate visiting teams, but is alarmed by the away form in this campaign.

He said: "A lot of fans would say it's the '12th man' effect which gives the players a buzz and maybe can influence refereeing decisions. I get the feeling that because we are strong at home a few teams come to Priestfield looking for a point, which puts them on the back foot.

"This travel sickness is nothing new, but somehow this season we can't see an end to it. At the moment the question is whether we can stay in League One just on our home form, which is a concern."

Picture: ADY KERRY

HOME ADVANTAGE: Ex-Gills boss Andy Hessenthaler (above) says Priestfield has a mystique which is hard to quantify

Picture: ADY KERRY

IN A JAM: Mark Stimson and his squad were caught up in traffic on Tuesday

We'll travel as a team from now on, says Stimson

GILLINGHAM will travel to all away games in one group after the farce surrounding the club's trip to Leyton Orient in midweek.

A police incident closed off the main trunk route to Leyton for several hours on Tuesday night, with nine players caught up in the traffic jam and arriving less than an hour before kick-off.

With the management staff and half the playing squad living closer to Leyton Orient than Gillingham, the club decided against hiring a coach to save costs.

Manager Mark Stimson, who was frustrated the kick-off was not delayed, admitted it would not be repeated.

He said: "We'd probably now get on a coach because if you could turn the clock back it would've been great if we all arrived at 7.15pm and the referee then would have had to delay the game.

"So if we've learned anything from it we'll all meet at a point, unless you've got someone like Dennis Oli, who lives two miles from Leyton Orient's ground. What is the point of him meeting the coach 10-15 miles away?

"We don't do it to be clever, we just use common sense, that's what we wanted from the referee, but we didn't get it."

Referee Andy D'Urso defended the decision after the game, saying there was nothing in the rules that states a kick-off should be put back if teams had at least seven players in the ground. As there were no safety issues, there was no reason for the game to be delayed.

Green light for step six

THE Football Association has given the green light to plans for introducing a new division in Kent's non-league pyramid.

The FA's leagues committee looked at a proposal earlier this month and agreed a new tier should be established at step six.

It would sit between the Kent League's Premier Division at step five and the Kent County League's top flight, which is at step seven.

As it stands, Kent is one of the only counties where sides do not have access to a competition at step six, which makes it difficult for clubs in the County League to climb the ladder.

The FA will now send out questionnaires to clubs before setting up a Kent Football Steering Group to oversee the process.

Keeper Lance Fleet's saving grace

FEW players have experienced more of a rollercoaster ride over the last three seasons than Ebbsfleet United goalkeeper Lance Cronin, ***writes Steve Tervet.***

When the experienced stopper says he's had "a few ups and downs" during his time at Stonebridge Road, he's massively understating the turbulence which has engulfed the club since the dizzy heights of winning the 2008 FA Trophy at Wembley.

Since then, manager Liam Daish has seen his squad gutted after the revenue provided by members of the MyFootballClub website dwindled, with less than a third opting to renew their subscriptions.

Cronin, 24, has seen his back four reshaped numerous times in the interim and admits life at the north Kent club has not been easy.

He said: "We had a great squad last season, most of the boys who won the Trophy were still here and we did alright. It was hard to see them go because we'd built up a strong squad.

"A few of the boys have a look to see what's going on [with the MyFC situation] but I don't tend to get involved. Whatever happens behind the scenes happens and I just want to play football."

Having arrived at Stonebridge Road from Shrewsbury Town in 2006, Cronin helped the Fleet to the brink of a play-off place in his first season and then kept a clean sheet as Torquay United were put to the sword at Wembley a year later.

While Cronin's own form this season has been good, he could only watch helplessly as the Fleet failed to score in eight consecutive games before wins over Mansfield and Stevenage provided a timely tonic.

He said: "I know it sounds weird, but I'm enjoying my goalkeeping more than I did last season because I've been much busier. Some people have written us off but we've got the character to stay up. If we can beat Mansfield and Stevenage, two of the top sides, we can beat anyone."

KEEPING POSITIVE: Goalie Lance Cronin says Fleet can escape relegation this season

Picture: GETTY IMAGES

RACE FOR SEATS AT THE TOP TABLE

FAST LAPS: Mike Conway and Gary Paffett (below) are aiming to to clinch a Formula One drive

Duo impress team chiefs as they test for a Formula One drive next season

By **TOM HOWARD**

TWO Kent drivers took a step closer to lining up on a Formula One grid next season after impressing at an official test this week.

Gary Paffett and Mike Conway were invited to take part in a three-day test at Spain's Jerez circuit and impressed their respective teams as they were asked to complete 411 laps between them.

With Mercedes Grand Prix, formerly Brawn GP, yet to name their replacement for departing world champion Jenson Button, Conway, from Sevenoaks, gave a solid performance to put his name in the frame to replace him.

The 24-year-old, who has been racing in the Indy Racing League this season, managed to complete 218 laps, but perhaps more importantly, was quicker than team-mate Marcus Ericsson by finishing fourth fastest overall.

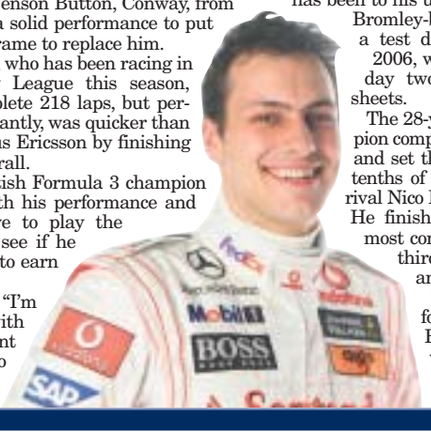
The former British Formula 3 champion was delighted with his performance and said he will have to play the waiting game to see if he has done enough to earn a seat for 2010.

Conway said: "I'm really happy with how the test went and it was great to be part of the team again and get to drive such a great car.

"We were running considerably heavier than most of the cars so I'm really pleased with the times I set. The team seemed to be happy with my performance, so now I have just got to wait and see what happens from here."

Team owner Ross Brawn, who masterminded Michael Schumacher's seven world titles, said he was impressed with Conway's display at Jerez.

He said: "Mike has done a very good job during the test in Jerez this week. It has been a busy programme with a wide variety of test items to cover. We know Mike well from his previous tests with the team and his feedback has been to his usual excellent standard."



Bromley-born Paffett, who has been a test driver with McLaren since 2006, was the star of the show on day two as he topped the time sheets.

The 28-year-old former DTM champion completed 80 laps on Wednesday and set the fastest time – a full four tenths of second faster than nearest rival Nico Hulkenburg.

He finished the test as one of the most consistent drivers, setting the third fastest time on day one and day three.

There are nine race seats up for grabs for next year's Formula One championship, which are likely to be confirmed early next year.

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Meet the new man in charge at Kent

EXCLUSIVE

KENT'S acting chief executive Jamie Clifford has revealed to Kent on Sunday his hopes of being appointed as Paul Millman's permanent successor at the cricket club.

In his first big interview since being named the club's acting chief executive following Millman's shock exit from St Lawrence last week, Clifford gives his views on the future of the club and how he wants the job on a permanent basis.

The 33-year-old, who will also continue to oversee business development at Canterbury, will be given a chance to impress by the county's committee, although they will continue to take applications for the job from outside the club before making a decision ahead of next season.

Clifford said: "Anybody who is given the opportunity that I have been given should think long and hard about the opportunity it presents them.

"With the energy, enthusiasm and vision that I have for the club, I think I have a lot to offer. It's up to the club to determine where those skills best fit, but I want to do the job long-term, there's no doubt about that. I think it would be wrong to say any different."

• ***For the full interview, see inside.***

OPPORTUNITY: Jamie Clifford wants to become full-time Kent chief executive

Picture: ADY KERRY

CARD: Benn Barham failed to qualify for the European Tour

Benn flunks Tour school examination

BENN Barham says he only has himself to blame after failing to earn a European Tour card for 2010 at Qualifying School this week.

The Kent golfer, who finished 133rd in the European Tour rankings this season, travelled to Spain to take part in Qualifying School hoping to keep his tour dreams alive by earning one of 30 available cards.

After five average rounds, the 33-year-old, from Ashford, needed to shoot the round of his life in the final round at the PGA Golf Catalunya resort on Thursday.

Beginning the day tied 58th, he needed to make up six shots to move into the top 30, but returned to the clubhouse picking up just one shot, leaving him tied in 63rd place.

He said: "At the end of the day I just couldn't get my game going and if I had holed two more putts on each round I would have won a Tour card. I've only got myself to blame.

"I could look back at Austria and say I should have won the tournament there, but somebody shot a 60 and you just cannot legislate for that. I had plenty of opportunities to play well on the Tour and the truth is I didn't."

Despite missing out on finishing in the top-30 at Qualifying School, Barham hopes his European ranking should secure him entry into 10 European Tour events next season.

EAST KENT EDITION

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